

## HELLFIRE, SUCCESS AND BEING BARRY

Beryl Bainbridge: The secrets of long life as a novelist

THE EYE



## HEART THROB WHO TURNED NASTY

Why Neil Pearson is changing his image for television

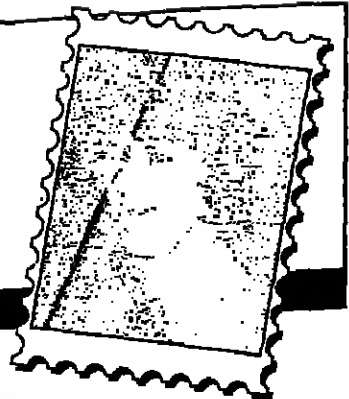
THE EYE



## DO WE NEED A CAMILLA STAMP?

Miles Kingston on a miracle that would upstage Diana

COMMENT PAGE 20



# THE INDEPENDENT

Thursday 19 February 1998 45p No 3,538

## Hillsborough ruling sparks families' fury

By Jason Bennetto

FAMILIES of the victims of the Hillsborough disaster reacted with dismay last night and threatened to take legal action after the Government ruled out a new public inquiry into the tragedy. The announcement followed the publication of an eight-month study that found no new evidence to justify reopening the case, in which 96 Liverpool fans died at Sheffield Wednesday's football ground in 1989.

Campaigners for the dead football supporters from the match between Liverpool and Nottingham Forest condemned yesterday's report as a "white-wash". In the streets surrounding the home of Liverpool Football Club there were emotional scenes as the news, as fans gathered to pay their respects.

The report, however, did find new material to suggest that the football club and city council grossly overestimated the number of spaces available in the section of the stadium where the fans were crushed and that the wrongly sized barriers were fitted. It found that 658 too many spectators could have been allowed into one section.

Campaigners had hoped for a new inquiry and criminal prosecutions of the police officers who were criticised in the original Taylor report into the disaster.

Last July, Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, appointed Lord Justice Stuart-Smith to conduct an "independent

scrutiny" of claims that police had deliberately covered up a video of the overcrowding and new medical evidence.

But Mr Straw told the Commons yesterday that the mini inquiry had found that the "new" material did not add "anything significant" to what was already available. He therefore ruled out quashing the accidental death verdicts of the inquest or setting up a fresh inquiry and prosecuting police officers.

The report's conclusions were a bitter blow for campaigners, but gave unequivocal backing to the earlier inquiries.

Lord Justice Stuart-Smith acknowledged that while his report would come as a "disappointment" to campaigners, he could not be swayed by compassion. "That 96 people, the majority of them young should set out in high hopes and spirits on a fine spring day, and yet within a space of less than half an hour suffer crushing injuries from which they died, is nothing less than appalling," he said.

The "new evidence" examined included a video from a closed-circuit TV at the Leppings Lane end of the stadium where the disaster happened. It was alleged that police had initially told the Taylor inquiry that they were taken by a faulty camera and then that they were missing.

However, Lord Justice Stuart-Smith concluded that the video was available at the original inquiry and that the footage was of no significance.

He also rejected claims that the inquest was "flawed" because a doctor said at least one victim was alive after the "cut off" point in which evidence was considered by the coroner.

But he did highlight the over-estimation of the capacity of the Leppings Lane terrace because proper measurements were not taken. This resulted in 2,900 tickets being sold for an area that should have taken 2,242. The barrier was also too low and there was a gap in the fencing, both of which "contributed to the substantially larger number of deaths in Pen 3," said the report.

Lord Justice Stuart-Smith said that if this had been known Lord Taylor might "have criticised Sheffield Wednesday Football Club, their consultant engineers, and those responsible for licensing the ground in more stringent terms."

He also criticised the police disciplinary system which meant that the officer in charge had not been punished because he left the service.

The report and Mr Straw's response drew a furious response from the families, who said they would now be considering private prosecutions against senior officers in charge of policing on the day.

Trevor Hicks, chairman of the family support group, said the relatives were disgusted by Labour's "cynical betrayal".

"In very simple terms there is nothing for the families," he said. "We are totally devastated. There is not a shred of comfort in it at all."



Palace aide: Colleen Harris, 42, who was yesterday announced to be the Prince of Wales's new deputy press secretary Politics, page 10

## Expert report on cannabis is suppressed

By Charles Arthur  
Science Editor

World Health Organisation officials have suppressed an analysis by an expert panel of scientists who determined that long-term use of cannabis is less harmful than alcohol or tobacco.

Details of the clampdown are published today in *New Scientist* magazine, and have been confirmed separately by *The Independent*. A member of the international panel said yesterday that he wanted the findings published: "I felt comfortable having it in our draft, and I thought it was useful information."

Had the WHO published their work, it would have given cannabis a public and scientific legitimacy that the United States and United Nations have long denied, as part of their "war against drugs". But there is growing evidence that the criminalisation is unjustified.

In a special investigation into the drug, *New Scientist* concludes that "politicians will just have to bite on the bullet - cannabis will have to be decriminalised". It is the most prominent scientific publication so far to provide backing for the *Independent* on Sunday's campaign to decriminalise cannabis use in the UK.

In an editorial, the magazine says that "despite the anti-drug propaganda that circulates in the US, most people are thankfully well aware that no great social disaster has befallen the Netherlands, where cannabis has been sold openly in coffee shops for years".

It adds that "only the politicians still seem irrationally terrified by the idea of any relaxation in the law: they think they can continue lumping all

drugs together". After two years' research, the WHO panel determined that in the long-term, cannabis has fewer effects on health than either tobacco or alcohol in five out of seven categories, and carries only a marginally higher risk in the other two.

But the WHO cut that section from a report last December into the harmful effects of cannabis, following pressure from the US's National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA).

One of the panel members, Billy Martin of the Medical College of Virginia, based in Richmond, Virginia, said yesterday: "I wasn't involved in those discussions, but I know WHO talked to NIDA after our draft was submitted." The NIDA has been a consistent opponent of moves to decriminalise cannabis use in the US, citing various experimental studies which seem to show harmful effects from using the drug.

Dr Martin explained that the panel wanted to provide data which would compare the effects of cannabis if it were as readily available as alcohol or tobacco. "We wanted to do a qualitative comparison, rather than a quantitative one. With society as it is, its effects are clearly no worse than those of other two drugs." But that is a distorted comparison, because criminalisation means fewer people regularly use cannabis.

The panel investigated research on the effects of the three drugs. Topics included harm to the foetus if used by pregnant mothers, tendency to promote violent behaviour, tendency to cause dependence, withdrawal effects, and effects on brain function. In all these cases, cannabis was found to be less harmful than tobacco or alcohol.

## Minister seeks new deal for working women

By Anthony Bevins  
and Fran Abrams

WORKING women are "to be taken more seriously" as one of the basic principles of the new welfare system, Frank Field, the minister for welfare reform, said last night.

The *Independent* has been told that ministers are not only considering ways in which women's private pension provision can be bolstered, but also ways in which the tax and benefits system can be used to ease the working woman's burden of childcare costs.

Mr Field said in a London lecture that Beveridge's world of 50 years ago had been "centred on male breadwinners and female housewives".

Under the male-orientated Beveridge Report, women and children were to benefit but "they would do

so, generally speaking, only as the workless members of a family headed by a working man".

The minister said that such a system was inappropriate for a society in which male workers were about to be outnumbered by female workers - with the latest Labour Market Trends showing 11,361,000 working women, just 161,000 short of the seasonally-adjusted male workforce figure.

"Yet the existence of what will shortly be the majority group of the working population has still to be adequately recognised in our social security system," Mr Field said. "The world has changed. So, too, must welfare."

With the consultative Green Paper on Welfare Reform expected soon after the 17 March Budget, Mr Field said that one of the principles it would contain would relate to

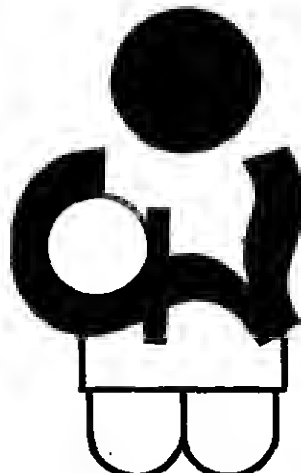
"how this male social security system can be feminised".

The *Independent's* childcare campaign won backing last night from Harriet Harman, the Secretary of State for Social Security. Although Ms Harman did not support our call for a childcare tax allowance of £1,800 per year, she welcomed the crusade in an article in today's paper.

"We are delighted to see *The Independent* is taking up the issue of childcare. It is very dear to my heart," she wrote.

"To support women as they redefine their role as mothers in working for their children as well as caring for them, this government will ensure that they are backed up with a choice of quality, affordable childcare."

However, she suggested that this would be done not through tax



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breaks but through a range of measures already in the pipeline. These included a working families tax credit for low-paid parents, £300m for out of school childcare and an extra £100 a week for parents with two or more children under 12 who are eligible for Family Credit.

Harriet Harman, page 8  
Features, page 18

## Brightest and the best fail even the simplest test of general knowledge

By Judith Judd  
Education Editor

TODAY'S students may know the name of Winnie the Pooh's favourite food but they cannot list all the British monarchs of this century.

A study of 420 students at a leading university shows that many are poor at basic arithmetic, grammar and general knowledge.

While 93 per cent knew Winnie the Pooh's favourite food, only a third could name all the British monarchs of this century. Only 15 per cent knew how many countries were founder members of the European Economic Community and only 63 per cent knew the name of the religion whose followers worship Allah. A third did not know the county in which Cheltenham is.

The survey, outlined in Education+ in The Eye section of *The Independent* today and carried out by Rob Lowe, a lecturer at Uni-

versity College, Stockton, part of Durham University, found that standards of grammar and arithmetic were poor. Mr Lowe does not wish to name the university but says it is an "historic" institution.

Only half knew that the sentence "Whose left that book behind?" was incorrect and only just over half were able to punctuate correctly the sentence: "questionnaires can be fun time is essential for satisfactory completion".

In arithmetic, two-thirds failed to multiply correctly a quarter by a quarter and more than half gave the wrong answer to the sum  $24 \div 2 \times 6$ .

Natural scientists did worse than their peers in humanities at literacy but were not always better at numeracy.

Mr Lowe found that attendance rates at classes at universities in the North-East were "alarmingly low", ranging from 60 per cent for social science and humanities classes to 80

per cent for natural sciences.

He questions whether standards are high enough. "Ninety per cent of students who complete their courses probably get a degree of some sort," he said. "If many are able to do so on a foundation of 60 per cent attendance, and, anecdotally, with minimal reading, are the demands that lecturers impose stringent enough? Alternatively, why is 40 per cent of teaching input redundant to successful achievement of a degree?"

Mr Lowe argues that there should be a new hierarchy of universities to take account of the huge variety of students brought into the system through a decade of expansion.



INSIDE GUIDE: WEATHER, P2 CROSSWORDS, P32 AND EYE P10 . TODAY'S TELEVISION, EYE P12 . FULL CONTENTS, P2

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## 5,000 hip operations may have to be repeated

By Jeremy Laurance  
Health Editor

UP TO 5,000 patients who have undergone hip replacement surgery are to be recalled and may have to have repeat operations after problems emerged with their artificial hips.

The Medical Devices Agency issued a hazard warning last night about the Capital hip made by the 3M company. Launched in 1991, it is one of more than 40 artificial hips on the market.

The warning will mean many, mostly elderly, patients will have to undergo complex revision surgery, which is riskier than the original hip replacement operation, imposing a major burden on the NHS. Each revision operation costs over £5,000 and if all 5,000 patients had repeat surgery it would account for half the entire workload of repeat hip replacements undertaken by the NHS each year.

Richard Villar, consultant orthopaedic surgeon at Addenbrooke's hospital, Cambridge, said: "This is a major surgical drama. It will tie a lot of surgeons down for a long time. Waiting lists will increase enormously and they are long enough as it is."

It was unclear last night what the nature of the problem with the device is or whether all, or only some, of the patients fitted with it will require repeat operations.

It appears that the device works eroding healthy bone which causes fractures and reduces the success rate of further hip replacement operations.

The Department of Health called a press briefing for 9.30am this morning and the company has set up a helpline for patients.

More than 46,000 hip replacements are carried out each year on patients who have difficulty walking because of arthritis.

The replacement hip consists of

a metal ball and shaft which is fitted into the thighbone and a socket made of plastic or metal into which the ball is inserted to form a new joint.

More than 90 per cent of replacement hips are expected to last 15 years, but failure rates vary widely. The most frequent cause of failure is loosening of the joint as a result of wear and tear.

The Capital hip was based on the famous Charnley design, the original hip replacement, invented in the 1960s which has never been bettered.

Concerns were raised about the Capital hip last year when surgeons from Harlow Wood Orthopaedic Hospital, Nottingham, published a paper in the *British Journal of Bone and Joint Surgery* which revealed that up to 26 per cent of patients experienced an early failure of the implant. On average they lasted just over two years.

Different materials, including titanium and ceramics, have been tried in the devices to overcome such problems.

The materials and quality of manufacture are controlled by the Medical Devices Agency but the devices are not required to undergo long-term clinical trials before being introduced. Some orthopaedic surgeons believe performance tests should be carried out on new hip designs before allowing them onto the market.

In Sweden there is national register of hip replacement operations which allows problems with a new device or material to be spotted early but there is no similar register in Britain.

When a new cement called Boneloc was discovered to have a high failure rate in Sweden it had been used on only 15 patients but in Britain it had already been used on 1,800 patients.

The Capital hip helpline number is 01509 613038



Setting a bad example: Helena Bonham Carter in the recent hit film *The Wings of the Dove*

## Health watchdog fumes as stars fail to stub out

By Glenda Cooper  
Social Affairs Correspondent

Smouldering its way through dozens of films, the cigarette has been seen as a traditional accompaniment to the film stars of the 1940s and 1950s.

But tobacco firms were yesterday accused of targeting the film industry in an attempt to get round a future advertising ban. The Health Education Authority has raised the concerns after finding the number of smoking scenes in hit films increased four-fold between 1990 and 1995.

New research by the HEA found that the number of smoking scenes had risen dramatically since the beginning of the decade. In 1997, 40 per cent of the top 10 box-office hits had more than 10 smoking scenes compared with 10 per cent in 1990 films.

The study also found that 80 per cent of the top 10 films made in 1990 and 1995 - among them the blockbusters *Apollo 13* and *Total Recall* - contained some smoking scenes. There were six times as many cigarette brand names featured in films made two years ago than in 1990 - with one brand in particular featuring heavily.

Those particularly "guilty" included Bruce Willis in the action thriller *Die Hard with a Vengeance*, Christian Slater in *Interview with a Vampire* and Kurt Russell in *Sturgeon*. In *Space Jam*, the male baddie is rarely seen without a cigar and the smoking in *Muriel's Wedding* says the HEA seems to be linked to the primary characters' desire to be different and shed their inhibitions.

In 1990, about 20 per cent of leading characters were seen smoking but this rose to 48 per cent by 1995. The authors of the report found that smoking was increasingly being used to portray "bad guys" or characters generally seen as unsympathetic. Smoking was also more likely to be featured in pressured or stressful situations rather than sexy scenes.

The HEA wants the film industry to reconsider how smoking is portrayed after concluding that young people are influenced by images of stars smoking, including Robert de Niro and Kevin Costner, and often copy the habits of their icons. Figures produced by the HEA



Sign of the times: Marlene Dietrich, when smoking was sexy

show that 16-24-year-olds in England are the only group where smoking has increased over recent years. Of the 6 million people in this age group, approximately 1.85 million are regular smokers.

There are approximately 121,000 deaths every year in the UK attributed to smoking, and the authority says the vast majority of smokers would like to give up their habit.

There were also six times as many cigarette brand names featured in 1995 films. Keith Belling, the Health Education Authority expert who researched the report, said: "The overwhelming majority of brands featured in films were Marlboro. It is perhaps not surprising that when the opportunities for advertising cigarettes are becoming fewer for tobacco companies, that they are looking for other ways of keeping cigarettes in the public eye."

Kenneth MacKinnon, professor of film studies at the University of North London, who co-wrote the report, said smoking was now being used as an image of rebellion. "Smoking can now be portrayed as quite virtuous today. It is a way of challenging the establishment view, it is a way of fighting what is called health fascism. That is a notion which young people can latch on to."

John Carlisle, executive director of the Tobacco Manufacturers Association, said the HEA claims were "complete rubbish". And he added: "The HEA has absolutely no evidence to back up this claim, they are trying the appoint themselves as a new type of health censor."

## Tesco store throwing away £3,500 of food every week

By Rosa Prince

HUGE amounts of quality food which could be used to feed the homeless is being thrown away by supermarkets every week.

An episode of BBC2's fly-on-the-wall documentary *Superstore*, filmed at Tesco's Banbury branch, to be screened next month, will reveal for the first time that £3,500 of produce is binned every week at a single store.

Until now the exact levels of edible food being wasted has been difficult to quantify, as the big supermarkets are reluctant to give figures. Despite calls from homeless charities and food organisations, only a tiny amount of waste food is being passed on to charity.

Jacqui Webster of the National Food Alliance, said: "Wastage is a serious problem and it is something that needs to be addressed. The amount that is being thrown away is incredible."

The supermarkets are wary of giving food directly to the homeless, preferring to work with specialist distribution charities who will ensure substandard food is not passed on. But the number of charities capable of doing this is small, and food at the majority of supermarket branches which are not near a distribution centre is being destroyed.

An estimated £6.7m worth of food is being thrown away every week by supermarkets - enough to feed 370,575 homeless people.

Captain Bill Cochrane of the Salvation Army said: "There is enormous scope there for us passing on good quality food. We have a network of more than a thousand Salvation Army centres and all of them will be near a supermarket."

"I can understand their anxiety about

making sure the food is safe but those are anxieties we share. The last thing we would do is put anyone at risk."

Marks and Spencer is the only supermarket where all edible waste food is passed on to charity.

Of the other supermarkets, just 100 Tescos out of 588 branches participate in Provision, a distribution charity set up by the Institute of Grocery Distribution. Tesco staff have orders to throw out all their waste fresh food.

Out of 389 Sainsbury branches, 10 supply the FairShare scheme run by the homeless charity Crisis, which specialises in fresh food.



Caught on camera: BBC television film of store reveals level of waste

Other food is donated to Provision through the supermarket's head office.

Of Waitrose's 117 branches, 20 stores supply goods to Provision. This is being increased to 48 branches next month.

Safeway is a member of Provision and also gives some waste food to zoos. A spokeswoman could not say how much food is being binned but said the company was improving waste management.

All the supermarkets said they were committed to expanding their level of involvement in distributing waste food to charity. Until they do, millions of pounds worth of good quality food will continue to end up in land fill sites and incineration centres every week.

As supermarkets are especially wary of giving away fresh produce for fear of food poisoning, almost all is currently being destroyed. Only two charity centres in the whole of the country, one of which is supplied by Sainsbury, cater for the distribution of fresh food.

Stephen Bromberg, spokesperson for Crisis, which runs FairShare, said: "We know that three in five homeless people do not have fresh food in their diet at all so this is the food we really need to give to them."

"And there is no reason why supermarkets shouldn't give fresh food. We can stop safety being a problem. We guarantee we can get food out of the supermarket and to homeless centres by the following lunch time."

Maya Van Eerde, spokesperson for Marks and Spencer, said individual branch managers made arrangements with local charities who signed a contract taking on responsibility for food safety.

She said: "We haven't had any problems and we've been doing this for a long time. The charities are so grateful to receive the food they stick to the contract and as far as we're aware it works very well."

As well as finding ways to dispose of waste food, supermarkets are attempting to cut down on wastage, turning to sophisticated schemes to regulate the supply side.

Other initiatives include reducing food as it approaches its sell by date or putting it in staff canteens.

Martin Bowden, who has been seconded to Crisis by Sainsbury, said the supermarket hoped eventually to pass all its safe waste food, including fresh produce, on to the homeless.

slight imperfections that show up as light and dark lines running across the fabric. They are caused by the way the material is forced through the sewing machines by workers sewing the seams. The fabric gets bunched and the raised portion is worn away, creating white bands.

At the trial, the accused's defence team tried to discredit the "jean gene" theory by introducing 34 similar pairs. But the FBI was able to distinguish every pair from those of the accused and the man was convicted.

1996. Like any bank robber worth his salt he was wearing a mask to cover his face, but part of his trousers were showing on the video footage.

When the film was enlarged the bureau's forensic scientist, Richard Vorder Bruegge, noticed worn patches on the jeans.

Police had several suspects for the robbery and on closer inspection it was noticed that one was wearing a pair of jeans with more than 24 features that matched the "bar code" of the jeans on the film.

The pattern on the jeans is caused by

## Strides in jean technology help catch thief

By Andrew Buncombe

IN THE world of forensic science, trapping criminals by identifying their DNA and their individual genes is old hat. At least it is in Spokane, Washington State, where local law enforcers are tracking down offenders by their individual jeans.

In a case that could see wised-up criminals ditching their denims for something else, the FBI caught a bank robber after identifying his jeans on a security video.

The man was caught on film in April

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Yes, the owners are still dogged by that old saying about who they really look like



Two pictures by the photographer Robert Daly seen at the Association of Photographers' awards at the Barbican Centre in London. An exhibition of selected photographs runs at the Association Gallery in Dornago Street from 3 to 28 March

## Parents of heart children call for new inquiry

By Jeremy Laurence  
Health Editor

PARENTS of children who died or were brain damaged following heart surgery at Bristol Royal Infirmary demanded a public inquiry yesterday as the surgeon at the centre of the case appeared before the General Medical Council.

James Wisheart, paediatric cardiac surgeon and former medical director of the infirmary, appeared nervous and uncertain as he took the witness stand for the first time in the longest running disciplinary case in British medical history. He is charged, with two colleagues, of allowing operations on children with complex heart defects to continue after the high number of deaths indicated they should have been stopped. All three deny the charges.

Outside the council's London headquarters, parents of the children who died, who had travelled overnight from the West Country, held a silent candle-lit vigil with tiny black coffins at their feet represent-



Accused: Cardiac surgeons Janardan Dhasmana (left) and James Wisheart

ing the lives lost. Malcolm Curnow, spokesman for the Bristol Heart Children Group, said: "Up to 1,000 children have been exposed to unnecessary risk during the period currently under investigation by the GMC. But the doctors who run the GMC are only looking at two types of operations in a restricted five-year period. We have had enough of secrecy. We need an independent public inquiry to establish the full scale of the horror story."

Inside the hearing, Mr Wisheart, 59, clasped his hands in

front of him and darted occasional quick glances at his counsel as he answered questions about his team's surgical record.

There were 29 deaths among 53 children who underwent surgery. Speaking slowly and carefully, with frequent pauses, Mr Wisheart told the council that he had kept records of the operations from the start of his employment at the infirmary in 1975 and had begun tabulating the results, to make comparisons easier, from the mid-Eighties.

He said the surgical team met twice a week to discuss individual patients, and, from 1986, further meetings were held with pathologists to discuss any patient who died. In addition, all the specialists involved met two or three times a year in the evenings in someone's house to review their performance and discuss problems and future strategy.

"The quality of the work being done nationally and internationally was constantly improving and one had to keep up with that," he said.

The disciplinary hearing,

which began in October and is not expected to end until April, breaks new ground for the GMC. Mr Wisheart and his co-defendants, cardiac surgeon Janardan Dhasmana and trust chief executive, John Roylance, are charged with serious professional misconduct, the first time such a charge has been

brought over a complex issue of the risks and benefits of medical or surgical treatment. Normally such charges are levelled for clear breaches of professional ethics such as having a sexual relationship with a patient, misprescribing controlled drugs or refusing to visit a patient.

The Bristol Heart Children

Group, set up by campaigners representing 68 children who died or who were brain damaged at the infirmary, said that the GMC had refused to include adults in its investigation and had limited it to two procedures over a limited period from 1990 to 1995.

"We believe this hearing is

not fair, not thorough and not complete," they said.

In a statement the GMC said the case had been brought after an extensive investigation which concluded that questions of serious professional misconduct arose only in relation to the question of whether the defendants should have acted on

warnings from colleagues about the high death rate.

"Although we are sympathetic to the tragedies which many of the parents in this case have experienced, the GMC does not have legal powers to investigate wider organisational issues nor to offer individual patients personal redress."

## Scots councils called to account

THE public sector watchdog has criticised seven new Scottish councils for failing to produce their accounts for examination. In its annual report for 1997, The Accounts Commission for Scotland expresses concern over the "severe delays" which have prevented it from establishing if councils are spending public money in a proper way. The report also highlights a worrying level of misconduct among council workers.

Over half, 83, of the 150 frauds detected in Scottish councils in 1997 were carried out by council employees, the report says. The cases would have cost the taxpayer £154,000. The seven councils "named and shamed" by the Commission are: Clackmannanshire, East Ayrshire, East Lothian, Fife, City of Glasgow, North Ayrshire, and West Dunbartonshire.

In addition, 19 of the former regional and district councils' audits have still not been completed, despite the fact that the deadline for their submission was last August.

The Chairman of the Accounts Commission, Professor Ian Percy said: "It is of great concern that we do not yet have assurance from the audit that all our local councils spent public money properly in 1996 and 1997."

"I see no reason why local authorities should not mirror the efficiency of the health service and indeed, large companies in the private sector reporting on time."

The Commission said an estimated £90m was lost to housing benefit cheats and up to £10m in prescription frauds and errors. Professor Percy said: "Millions of pounds could be saved each year by identifying and wiping out weaknesses in these systems."

## London Underground faces strike by power workers

The London Underground system faces total shutdown in a month's time after union leaders sanctioned a ballot on industrial action among workers who control the power supply to the network.

The 300 staff involved - blue collar workers and management - are seeking to defend their pension rights which they believe will be undermined when their department is taken over by a private consortium. The employees, who are confidently expected to support disruption in the ballot, also want to defend their rights to travel concessions. Jimmy Knapp, general secretary of the RMT transport union, said: "Rail privatisation has been a disaster, we shouldn't make the same mistake with London Underground."

— Barrie Clement

## Dartmoor locks changed

Cell locks at Dartmoor Prison, in Cornwall, have had to be changed after a master key went missing. The key fitted "quite a number of cells" at the Category B jail, set in the heart of the Devon wilderness, said a prison source.

A "re-locking" process is at present under way at the 193-year-old prison.

## Gallagher guitar auction

Noel Gallagher's Epiphone Supernova guitar has been donated by the band Oasis to be auctioned in aid of the BBC Children In Need charity.

The songwriter's guitar - signed by the band - raised £5,290, more than double the estimate as props from the band's latest album sleeve went under the hammer. Fans and collectors scooped up items ranging from a blackboard (£460) to an oversized desk calendar (£5,060) and spent more than £32,000.



## Extra aid for Montserrat

The British Government is to provide an extra £4.8m and 100 new pre-fabricated houses for the people in the volcano-hit island of Montserrat. Nineteen people have been killed and many have lost their homes since the volcano started erupting in June 1995 for the first time in 300 years.

## Sticky shaving time

Scientists have been given a £50,000 grant to tackle a problem which few men knew existed. The cash will enable a team of experts to carry out a study aimed at finding out why shaving foam goes gooey.

## The Link SALE

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## I'm black – so what, says prince's aide

By Colin Brown  
Chief Political Correspondent

THE Prince of Wales yesterday hired his first black press aide as a committee of MPs took a sideswipe at a public appointments watchdog for not being radical enough in pressing public offices to hire more members of the ethnic minorities.

Colleen Harris, 42, was poached from the Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions, where she was head of the media planning and coordination unit.

Mrs Harris was hired as the Prince's deputy press secretary against tough competition after an interview a month ago with the Prince, who is said to have been impressed by her "bubbly" personality.

Mrs Harris, whose appointment was announced yesterday by St James's Palace, said: "I accept that it's news to have a black member of the Prince of Wales's Household. But I think

that's where the news starts and where it ends."

Prince Charles has long complained about the lack of black people in the Royal Household, and the guards patrolling Buckingham Palace, although the palaces do not carry out full ethnic monitoring policies.

The need for public bodies to be pressed to hire more members of the ethnic communities was underlined in a hard-hitting report by a committee of MPs under Rhodri Morgan, the Labour MP for Cardiff West.

It called for "serious changes" in the way that public appointments were made so that they echoed "the interests, concerns and backgrounds of most of the people in the country".

Mr Morgan said that in future the new tests should be applied to jobs which are currently in the lap of the Prime Minister, including the appointment of bishops, judges and university vice-chancellors.



History man: Teit Ritzan, creator of Edinburgh's 'Missing Links' show, with one of his exhibits Photograph: David Moir

## Sinn Fein demands RUC quiz

By David McKittrick and Alan Murdoch

THE MULTI-PARTY talks in Dublin ended in legal and political limbo yesterday with the issue of Sinn Fein's expulsion from negotiations still unresolved.

The British and Irish governments, having listened to exhaustive arguments, will deliver at a later stage their formal deliberation, which is expected to be the temporary exclusion of the republicans from the talks.

Sinn Fein's hard-fought rearguard campaign to avoid this included the seeking of an injunction from the Dublin high court. The republican legal submission included the intriguing suggestion that the Royal Ulster Constabulary chief constable, Ronnie Flanagan, should be cross-examined by Sinn Fein about his statement that the IRA was involved in two recent killings in Belfast. The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Mo Mowlam, should also be subject to cross-examination, Sinn Fein argued.

The case has been adjourned until today, but in the meantime, the three-day Dublin session, which was supposed to deal with the key issue of north-south links, ended last night. In the end, the three-day expulsion wrangle meant that the central issue was never discussed. Hopes that the Dublin interlude might "kick start" the talks have thus been dashed.

Precedent suggests that republicans, if ejected, would be re-admitted after a period of weeks. No one knows whether

their removal, even on a temporary basis, would affect the stability of the peace process.

The Sinn Fein president, Gerry Adams, said there "was a lot of anger" and frustration about the possible removal of Sinn Fein. He called on supporters to react "with determination and discipline".

The talks chairman, former US Senator George Mitchell said he was disappointed that talks business had been held up but added that he believed agreement was still possible. "Nobody ever said it would be easy," he observed. "I am convinced we're going to get past this difficulty."

He endorsed the suggestion that the parties should at some stages be removed from media contact for a concentrated period of negotiation.

The legal action, in the name of Sinn Fein's talk representatives, followed Ms Mowlam's expulsive move, launched after the RUC linked the IRA with two Belfast murders.

The application claimed the party had a right to attend talks under ground rules laid down in January 1996 as it "had not disavowed" the Mitchell Principles of democracy and non-violence, and had "at all times worked to achieve a lasting peace".

Counsel for Sinn Fein said Ms Mowlam's move to expel the party contravened principles of natural and constitutional justice. It had denied it an opportunity to question the veracity or honesty of the decision, or cross-examine RUC Chief Constable Ronnie Flanagan on whose advice it was based.

## Police follow tip on murder victim

By Kim Sengupta  
in Belfast

POLICE in Northern Ireland last night were waiting to search a house where it is claimed the body of a murder victim has been dumped. This follows reports that a Catholic man was abducted by loyalists from a housing estate in Lurgan.

At the same time police and soldiers mounted a major operation against the paramilitary Loyalist Volunteer Force on another estate at Lurgan, arresting three people.

Police sources stated that they were taking reports of the body "extremely seriously" but they were waiting to enter the derelict building at Soldierstown Road in Aghalee while they checked for boobytraps.

The news of the search and fears of a sectarian killing came

as tension in the province mounted by the hour yesterday. Senior officers are preparing for a republican backlash on the streets if Sinn Fein are kicked out of the peace talks. In this climate the sectarian murder of a Catholic, they say, would be "incendiary".

The three suspects were arrested in the staunchly loyalist Mourneview Estate and taken for questioning to Gough Barracks in Armagh. The LVF murdered six Catholics following the assassination of their leader Billy Wright inside the Maze Prison in December by the republican Irish National Liberation Army.

RUC chief constable Ronnie Flanagan set up a special team to collate intelligence and carry out operations against the LVF following the spate of killings last month.

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# Bitter finale for Hillsborough families who battled for a decade

By Kathy Marks

IT IS NOW nearly a decade since that Saturday afternoon in April when Hillsborough in Sheffield became forever associated with death and mayhem, when 95 people went to a football match and never returned home. The intervening years have turned their relatives into resolute fighters, determined to establish what happened at the Sheffield Wednesday stadium in 1989, to learn exactly why their sons, daughters and brothers died, and who was to blame.

Now, after a police investigation, a government inquiry, an inquest, a High Court challenge, a documentary drama and, most recently, a review of evidence that led to the decision by the Home Secretary, Jack Straw, yesterday to rule out a fresh public inquiry, bereaved families are still waiting for answers.

The disaster, witnessed live on television by many relatives, took place before the FA



Cup semi-final between Liverpool and Nottingham Forest. In an effort to relieve a crush outside the ground, police ordered a large gate to be opened, allowing hundreds of fans to pour into the overcrowded pens at the Leppings Lane end. Scores of people died as they were forced against fencing.

The government inquiry chaired by Lord Justice Taylor laid the blame squarely on South Yorkshire police, who he said had failed to plan for the arrival of large numbers of fans. But to the fury of the fam-

ilies, senior police officers refused to admit at the inquiry any responsibility. Rumours that Liverpool fans caused the crush by arriving at the ground late, drunk and ticketless, compounded the grief of relatives.

It was in the inquest, held in 1991, that they looked to establish the exact cause of victims' deaths. But the South Yorkshire coroner, Dr Stefan Popper, refused to take evidence relating to events later than a cut-off point of 3.15pm on the day. The jury returned a verdict of accidental death. Two years later,



Hillsborough bereaved at the Commons yesterday. Top, McGovern's drama-documentary

Photograph: John Voos

## Spreading lessons is better for reading

By Matt Rodda

Government plans to make primary school children learn to read by concentrating on English for an hour a day may not be the best way to teach reading.

New research by Warwick University shows that three or four 15-minute sessions spread throughout the day can produce a "staggering" improvement in children's reading.

Dr Jonathan Solity, a lecturer in educational psychology at the university's Institute of Education, has studied four and five-year-olds in schools in deprived parts of Essex since 1996. In the project, teachers used a number of "common-sense" measures like constantly recapping on what was taught and regular testing.

The Early Reading Research is due to be published later this year. The study's results contradict the Department for Education's recommendation last July that schools spend an hour a day teaching literacy.

Dr Solity said initial results showed that after nine months children in the schools taking part were nine months ahead in their reading compared to those in similar schools.

Children in the schools in the study had an average reading age of five years and nine months, when their actual average age was five years and four months.

This compared to children in the comparison schools who had an average reading age of five years old.

Dr Solity said: "The results of this research were staggering. I applaud the Government for introducing more rigour into education. However, it could miss an opportunity to get

things done even more effectively, if it sticks to an hour of concentrated work for younger children."

He added that only 1 per cent of children in one age group in the study were at risk of having problems reading compared to 20 per in comparison schools. High achievers also did better in the schools taking part in the study.

Dr Solity stressed that he wanted to be sure his research was on the right track so the project was due to continue until 2001.

Paul Lincoln, Director of Education for Essex County Council, said: "As we know from common sense, little and often is probably the best way to learn. This research could be instrumental in taking the National Literacy Strategy further."

A spokeswoman for the Department for Education said the recommendation for primary schools to spend a concentrated hour a day teaching literacy was based on a wide range of research. Some was carried out by the Office for Standards in Education, other research was compiled in a survey of best practice in Britain and abroad.

She added that ministers were determined that the standard of English was improved and the approach was a key part of the strategy.

Ted Wragg, Professor of Education at Exeter University, said he was "sceptical but not negative" about the Warwick research.

He said studies often produced very good results just because the teachers were very enthusiastic and excited about taking part. The problem was what happened after the initiative stopped.



## We're not the only ones who know the £1.5 billion Britain spends every year on nuclear weapons is a waste.

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### DAILY POEM

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By 'Willie Bunter Yates', aka Carol Rumens

*I will arise and go now, and go to 'Inches Free'.  
A single room will I book there, without mini-bar or Teasmade.  
Nine enemies will I have there, and drink water endlessly,  
And I'll run every hour to the pee-loud glade.*

*And I shall have some peace of mind, for peace of mind is won  
When you drop below ninety calories a day,  
When you feel your waistband loosen, and your belly shrinking  
down  
(And you're payin' a quare sum to get that way).*

*I will arise and go now, for always I can hear  
The slim young bard within me, sighing to be let out.  
He's sighing as I order River Shannon Truile Meunière,  
And when I'm drinking pints of Murphy's stout.*

The Daily Poems today and tomorrow come from *The Miracle Diet*, which combines verse by Carol Rumens and cartoons by Viv Quillin. Taking a light, but nourishing, look at issues of food, fat, weight, and the social pressures to consume and conform, the book is published this week by Bloodaxe (£6.95).

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# 'Childcare vital to our strategy'



We are delighted to see *The Independent* is taking up the issue of childcare. It is very dear to my heart. It is a Government priority.

Any time you're out shopping you'll pay a woman at the check-out. When you come round from an operation in hospital, the chances are you'll see a woman at your bedside, a doctor or a nurse. The clothes you wear are likely to have been made by a woman.

A third of these women will also be someone's mother. Britain now depends on women's work as well as men's. Our economy depends on them – but so too do their families. Women today are very much part of the world of work but they still remain the backbone of the family. Women's shouldering of extra responsibilities to provide for their families by working has not yet been matched by men taking extra responsibility in the home. So for nearly all women, combining work and home responsibilities is a struggle, and sometimes a nightmare. Too many mothers can't find childcare that they can trust and afford – childcare that matches their work hours. It's not like this in the rest of Europe. There, high-quality childcare is taken for granted. But when it comes to childcare, Britain's children are Europe's

## THE MINISTER

poor relations. That's one of the reasons why lone parents here are less likely to work and more likely to be bringing up their children on benefit.

For many women, the cost of childcare can be crippling. That is why the Chancellor said in his pre-Budget report that his March Budget will build on the successful elements of Family Credit and deliver better help through the tax system for childcare costs.

This Government believes that childcare is central to children and families – central to our social and economic policy. Getting childcare right is crucial to building strong families and communities and to running a sound and stable economy.

In conjunction with the Department for Education and Employment we are driving forward our plans for the first ever National Childcare Strategy, which we will publish in the Spring. The three watchwords of our strategy are quality, accessibility, and affordability.

First, quality. We want to give our children the best possible start in life. That means more and better-trained childcare workers, an improved system of regulation and inspection, and a seamless service of education and childcare

which puts children at its heart.

Secondly, accessibility. We are investing £300m to expand out-of-school childcare provision over the next 5 years. This will fund up to an extra 30,000 childcare projects. That means provision for around a million children, up from only 100,000 children at present. £40m has already been made available for the first year, starting from this April.

Third, affordability. We have already announced plans to help low-income families with the cost of childcare. Families with two or more children under 12 will get up to £100 in their Family Credit.

Childcare must be flexible enough to help women balance their responsibilities at home and at work. This means breakfast clubs as well as after-school clubs and holiday play schemes, and it means mothers being able to choose the number of days or hours of childcare to help them match work-hours.

This Government, under the leadership of Tony Blair, is modernising Britain to meet the challenges of the 21st century. High-quality, affordable childcare to help children and support families in the changed world of work is an essential part of a modernised welfare state.

Harriet Harman is Secretary of State for Social Security and Minister for Women.

Harriet Harman reacts to *The Independent's* campaign on childcare while Glenda Cooper, Social Affairs Correspondent, meets a family caught in the trap between children and work, and readers tell us that they stand squarely in support of help for working mothers



Growing pains: Rob and Sue Youel with Rhiannon, aged 3, who had to be left with friends while her father went to college and her mother to work. Photograph: Steve Forrest/Guzzell

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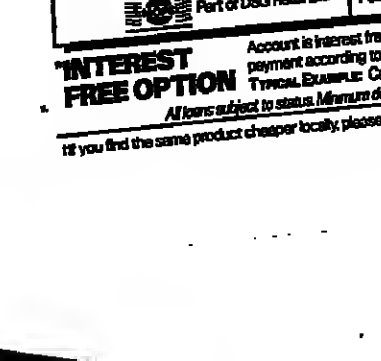


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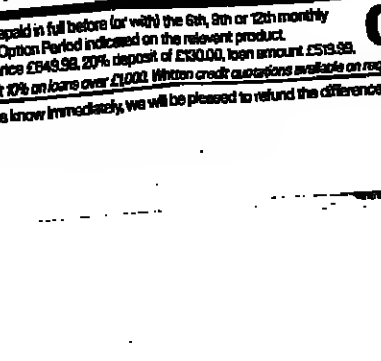


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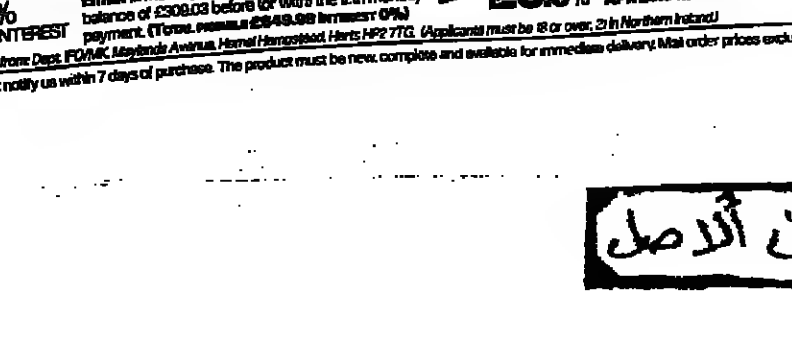


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## 'What are we meant to do without help?'

ROB YOUEL realised that as a manual worker approaching 50 he wasn't likely to find a job. Wanting to support his wife, Sue, and three-year-old daughter Rhiannon, he decided to increase his chances of finding employment by getting a qualification. "I wanted a job which could give both of them a decent standard of living," he said. So he enrolled for a BA in Humanities.

There the trouble began. Sue was working in a petrol station on shift work. Rob had to be at college a good half-an-hour away, four days a week. Who could look after Rhiannon? "We found out we couldn't get her in the college crèche," said Rob. "We applied to various places for funding but there was absolutely nothing. Their attitude was not that

they didn't want to help, but that they were incapable of doing so." Sue brings home on average £85 a week from her job. Their family credit of £42 is under review because Rob has qualified for a grant. Yet when they priced childminders they were quoted £60 a week, half their income. "If we had less than £3,000 income then we'd get help. But because Sue works we don't get any help," Rob said. The couple, who live in Pennington, West Yorkshire, worked it out by fanning Rhiannon out to friends and by Rob occasionally missing lectures if he had to look after the child. "I hadn't got into trouble although there were other people on my course who had been warned for missing too much," he said. Sue added: "My friend who looked after Rhiannon was very good, but you can't impose on people forever. It could only have been a stop-gap."

## Readers pledge support for mothers

YESTERDAY we launched *The Independent's* campaign for a tax allowance for working mothers. Since then dozens of readers have pledged their support. Those who have responded to our campaign include Lord Russell, and Lesley Abdela, chief executive of Project Parity which trains future women leaders around the world and Andrew Smith, Secretary of the Scottish Young Liberal Democrats. "Women who go back to work, bringing back valuable skills to the business world, pay a dear price for the luxury of independence – or just standing on their own feet," says Alison Purver of Leeds. "Having children and going to work should not be a luxury and I totally support your campaign."

"In the early Nineties, as a PhD student and a single parent of three children, I was trapped in what only can be described as childcare hell," says Dr Ijeoma Uchegbu from the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences, Strathclyde University. "Although I had an expensive child-minder ... I also had to rely on family, friends and kind neighbours ... Now my children are aged 15, 11 and 8 and I am a tax paying pharmacy lecturer and researcher. If I had given up, I would probably be a 'benefit scrounging single parent' to some."

"I am a solicitor, so enjoyed well above average female earnings, but as I wanted to work more and more part-time the cost-effectiveness diminished," says Penelope Overton of St Albans. "In the end I quit working after five years post-children. The issue which seemed particularly unjust was that for a time I was paying a nanny as an employee and was unable to deduct her salary from mine before tax." Kate Holden says: "The UK is so behind all other European countries, it does little to encourage mothers back to work and gives no help to those who have ... made the choice to return to work. It's not only lone mothers ... most people struggle to pay childcare and good childcare costs a fortune!" "Someone has finally recognised the terrible financial stress that is placed on families who need to pay for childcare," says Melissa Slater from London.

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# Acupuncture treatment link to deadly virus

By Ian Burrell

HEALTH officials have warned a London medical centre to stop treatment involving needles after an outbreak of the potentially deadly Hepatitis B virus.

Three patients have already contracted the virus and Barnet Health Authority in north London is trying to contact around 100 other patients of the Finchley Alternative Medical Centre to see if they are infected.

The acupuncture method, known as haemotherapy, has become fashionable in some complementary medicine circles and has attracted patients to London from across the world. The treatment involves injecting drops of the patient's own blood through a hole made by an acupuncture needle.

The authority said: "We would emphasise that no connection has yet been proved but we do know that the centre uses a homeopathic treatment where a drop of the patient's blood is extracted and then re-injected through the site of an acupuncture needle after being treated in a saline solution."

In usual acupuncture

practice, needles are sterilised by being kept in an autoclave at 121C for 15 minutes. Many acupuncturists only use single-use needles.

A spokeswoman for the authority said it had no powers to close the centre but officials from the Health and Safety Executive had visited the centre to decide whether to issue a prohibition notice. She later said that the centre had voluntarily agreed to stop all acupuncture and haemotherapy.

Hepatitis B is a virus strain which causes a potentially fatal infection of the liver. It has a fatality rate of between 6 and 20 per cent, whereas that of Hepatitis A is 1-2 per cent. It has an incubation period of 100 days or more and is transmitted by the transfusion of contaminated blood or by the use of contaminated needles. It is a particular threat to drug users or those having tattoos.

The scare began on Monday when the centre notified health officials that Hepatitis B had been identified in three patients, two from Birmingham and one from Oxford. The centre is legally required to report any evidence of communicable diseases to its health authority.

The centre is in an area noted for its wide range of alternative medicine clinics, acupuncturists and health food outlets. It was emphasised that clients of centres nearby were not at risk.

The centre yesterday refused to discuss the outbreak. A woman there said: "It is none of your business and you are not coming here. The health authority told us not to talk to any newspaper."

Last night many experts in Chinese and complementary medicine and acupuncture said they had never heard of haemotherapy.

John Parkinson, a spokesman for the British Acupuncture Council, said: "This is just not a standard technique. There is a common core of techniques which the majority of acupuncturists use regularly. Then there are a vast range of supplementary techniques which stem from the thousands of years of use in China."

Dr Biong Guo, an expert in Chinese traditional medicine who advises the Institute for Complementary Medicine, said she had not come across the treatment either.



A question of therapy: One form of acupuncture involves re-injecting a patient's blood through a needle hole

Photograph: Kunz/Network

## Dome not green, say campaigners

By Louise Jury

PLANS FOR a showpiece Millennium Village designed as a blueprint for future urban development were unveiled by John Prescott, the Deputy Prime Minister, yesterday.

But they immediately ran into criticism from housing campaigners, while environmentalists highlighted shortcomings in the whole Dome project.

The scheme, which will be at the heart of the Dome celebrations in Greenwich, south-east London, is intended to

encourage a thriving community of private home-owners alongside social housing.

The properties will incorporate the latest energy-saving and high-tech building innovations in a 32-acre site of steel and timber-framed homes.

Mr Prescott said: "This is an exciting opportunity to create a community built to the highest quality of architectural design, which embraces a mixed use approach and addresses environmental and energy conservation issues."

A consortium including Taylor Woodrow, Countryside

Properties and the Ujima Housing Association submitted the plans which have been chosen by the Government for development.

There will be 172 homes for rent and another 94 available under rent/buy schemes out of a total of 1,400.

But Shelter expressed reservations about the development which appeared to fall short of its recommendation of 40 per cent social housing.

Chris Holmes, the housing charity's director, said: "The Millennium Village provides a unique opportunity to think

about how we want to live in the 21st century. The health of the whole community will only flourish if those who are most vulnerable are provided for at the heart of this project."

Jenny Bates of the Friends of the Earth, welcomed the development and said it could be a model for other developments around the country.

But she said, apart from the Dome and the village, there was a third part of the site set aside for a large retail development with car parking which was "not much greener than a pile of toxic sludge".

## Britain accused over war assets

By Louise Jury

THE GOVERNMENT came under heavy fire yesterday over its failure to publish a report into cases where Britain refused to return properties and assets to Holocaust survivors after the Second World War.

Lord Janner demanded the publication of the Department of Trade and Industry and Foreign Office investigation.

And he wants the immediate compensation of individuals whom he claimed lost out because of Britain's actions.

Speaking in the House of

Lords, Greville Janner asked how Britain could expect action from the Swiss and the Vatican over their links to looted assets and not respond itself.

He said survivors did not understand the delay in releasing the report, which was delivered to the DTI before the conference on Nazi gold held in London at the beginning of December.

During the Second World War, bank balances and assets were blocked to prevent the enemy - which included any citizen or company of a country at war with Britain, therefore in-

cluding many Jews - drawing upon them.

After the war, treaties allowed the Government to offset its claims and the claims of British citizens in respect of their property taken in enemy country.

Although special arrangements were made for Jews to reclaim assets, the criteria often made it impossible.

Lord Janner, chairman of the Holocaust Educational Trust, wants compensation for the families who lost out. But it is believed that it is the question of whether to offer com-

penation - and if so, who should pay for it - which has caused the delay.

Lord Haskell, for the Government, said the Jews' losses were an "unintended by-product of necessary action taken to prevent enemy countries from securing assets in this country for their war effort".

He said: "I would like to stress that in general, the compensation arrangements proved successful."

"In all, some £2m was paid to around 1,000 claimants, with only some 16 per cent being refused payment."

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# Welfare 'must be feminised'

By Anthony Bevins  
Political Editor

THE MALE domination of Beveridge's social welfare system would be broken down by the Government's reforms, Frank Field said last night.

The minister for welfare reform said in a Commons debate on the uprating in social security benefits that the "dead hand of the past" was guiding too much of what was being spent - with more than 60 per cent of the over-£100bn budget set by legislation passed before 1948.

But in a later lecture, Mr Field also contrasted the Beveridge legacy with the requirements of the modern world - which would no longer accept a system of fixed, flat-rate benefits, paid out to "passive" claimants. He also criticised the outdated male culture of Beveridge, saying: "Male workers are about to be outnumbered by female workers in Britain. Of course, many women workers work part-time so they are able to combine parenting and paid work."

"Yet the existence of what will shortly be the majority

group of the working population has still to be adequately recognised in our social security system. Beveridge designed a male social insurance system. The world has changed. So, too, must welfare."

"Taking women seriously as workers is one necessary direction of welfare reform. There are a number of choices open to reformers. One strain of the reform process is out whether, but how this male social security system can be feminised."

"The existence of nearly half the working population now being composed of women has major implications for welfare reform, whether the route being advocated is one of means-testing, or of social insurance, or of a pay-as-you-go extension of funded provision."

A government source told *The Independent* that ministers were thinking particularly of bolstering the efforts of working women to build up their own pensions, but further help for childcare would also be considered under the guiding principles of the consultative Green Paper on welfare reform.

due to be published soon.

In a report from the Commons Social Security Committee yesterday - on the lessons that might be learned from the United States - MPs said that one of the ways work was made more attractive in Wisconsin was by giving help to people moving off welfare with the costs of child care and transport.

Among the "key themes" from the Wisconsin experiment, which the committee said should be addressed, was a "change from a passive income maintenance system to pro-active welfare to work strategy".

Mr Field said in his lecture that in 1948, two-thirds of welfare claimants had been over retirement age; today, two-thirds of claimants were of working age. He said, a fundamentally different service was therefore now required. "Benefit payments are required, of course, but governments now have an equal duty to provide what we are calling an active modern service to help claimants renegotiate to move back into work, whenever that is possible."



All smiles: Chancellor Kohl and his wife, Hannelore, with the Blairs at Number 10 last night

Photograph: Paul Hackett/Reuters

## Attack on honour for Kohl rebounds on Redwood

By Colin Brown  
Chief Political Correspondent

AN ATTACK on the City of London by Tory Euro-sceptics for honouring Chancellor Helmut Kohl with the Freedom of the City of London last night backfired on William Hague's trade spokesman, John Redwood.

Mr Redwood called on the City Corporation not to bestow the honour on Chancellor Kohl because it would be honouring European economic and monetary union.

Accusing the Government and the City of making a mistake in honouring the German leader, Mr Hague's leading Euro-sceptic said in a party news release: "Many British

people have no personal dislike of Chancellor Kohl but are strongly against monetary union."

"As monetary union is Chancellor Kohl's crusade, the City's indecision over EMU has been overwhelmed by their endorsement of its architect."

But last night Mr Redwood was given a slap over the wrist by Mr Hague and ordered to withdraw the press release. Red-faced Tory officials pointed out that Michael Howard, the shadow Foreign Secretary, was attending the ceremony at the Guildhall in honour of Chancellor Kohl.

"John Redwood has withdrawn the press release. Chancellor Kohl is being given the honour for the reunification of Germany without bloodshed," Margaret Beckett, the President of the Board of Trade, said. "Following our intervention, William Hague has recognised that John Redwood is out of control and needs to be brought to heel."

Downing Street had earlier denied it had "leaned" on the City Corporation to bestow the honour on Chancellor Kohl.

Chancellor Kohl's arrival at the Guildhall was greeted by a small demonstration of Euro-sceptics protesting at the threat to the pound posed by his plans for EMU.

The Prime Minister's official spokesman dismissed the claims by Mr Redwood, accusing him of being "one of the more serious victims of Opposition politics".

Number 10 said it was consulted by the Corporation on the decision to present the honour to Chancellor Kohl.

## TUC in union rights battle

By Barrie Clement

THE TUC yesterday opened up a new battle front with the Prime Minister over the controversial issue of union recognition.

Launching its biggest political campaign in a decade, the TUC urged Downing Street to ignore employers who sought to exclude small firms from the proposed law.

John Monks, TUC general secretary, warned against the CBI's contention that businesses employing fewer than 50 people should be excluded from the legislation. That would mean half the working population would not be covered by the law, Mr Monks said.

"Either union recognition is a basic democratic right at work, or it isn't," he said.

Unions believe they won the argument over the majority required in any workplace ballot on recognition. The CBI argued effectively that abstentions would be counted as votes against - a position thought to have been favoured by the Prime Minister. Employers contended that recognition should only be granted when half the workforce voted for it, rather than half of those who actually vote.

Now the TUC is turning to other issues which it believes are as important, but where the

Prime Minister might be inclined to favour the employers. The TUC is more confident of attracting the support of Margaret Beckett, President of the Board of Trade, and her minister, Ian McCartney.

Mr Monks said: "Small business lobbyists sometimes say that staff are treated as part of the family in such enterprises and therefore there is no need for any extra protection for employees."

"The small firm sector includes some of the best and some of the worst employers. The best have nothing to fear from union recognition and the staff of the worst need it more than most."

### SON'S SUDDEN DEPARTURE

While Chancellor Kohl was enjoying the freedom of the City of London yesterday, his youngest son, Peter, appeared to have made use of his freedom to leave it.

Peter, aged 33, has been working as an investment

banker in London for five years. But he suddenly left his former employer last month without notifying colleagues of a new career path.

Staff at the London branch of Salomon Brothers, the American investment bank,

said he had left without leaving any forwarding address.

A former colleague said: "He definitely didn't want to be seen just as the son of his father. We left him alone because he clearly wanted to live life as himself, not a young Helmut Kohl."

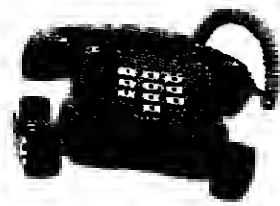
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# The toll road that will raze homes, ruin the greenbelt and won't even relieve congestion

By Louise Jury

RESIDENTS whose homes will be blighted by a six-lane privately owned toll expressway, which Labour once vowed would never be built, go to the High Court tomorrow to begin a legal challenge to the scheme.

An alliance of community groups is to demand access to the secret contract agreements for the construction of the Birmingham Northern Relief Road due to run through miles of green belt land and two sites of special scientific interest.

Labour vowed in opposition that it would block what will be Britain's first privately financed toll road, so residents were angered when Jobo Prescott, Deputy Prime Minister and responsible for transport, gave the go-ahead last summer.

They want to see details of the Department of Transport agreement with the contractors, Midland Expressway, and two hope to challenge compulsory purchase orders which have arrived through residents' letter boxes in the last week.

Charles Bradshaw-Smith, the alliance's chairman, said: "We have been advised that the agreement should be in the public domain, but the department refuses to make it public."

Although there are environmental objections—there is an environmental protest camp near Shenstone—residents also condemn the scheme on economic and practical grounds. Mr Bradshaw-Smith said: "The disgrace of this is the road isn't even going to fit the purpose."

Traffic figures suggested that at peak hours the relief effect would be minimal and the extra capacity would be more than consumed by growth in traffic, he said. And where the road rejoins the M6, a massive bottleneck would be created. Mr Bradshaw-Smith also pointed to an expert report last

week which concluded that new roads do not bring employment to an area.

The residents have so far raised £28,000 for their campaign, which is supported by 10 local councils and groups such as Friends of the Earth and Transport 2000.

Gerald Kells, of Friends of the Earth, said: "The Government is disrupting all these people's lives to no great purpose. We're not going to see motorways suddenly uncongested."

At Norton Canes, there will be 12 toll booths next to a 68-acre service area. The road will border a graveyard.

Lily Jones, 60, a parish councillor, said: "I'm a Labour person and I'm absolutely disgusted. People feel very let down by the Labour Party after they pledged when in opposition not to build this road."

At Hednesford Road to nearby Brownhills, a row of homes is to be compulsorily purchased and razed, to the fury of many residents who do not want to go. Others say they would rather see their properties compulsorily purchased than have to live by the road.

Hazel Barnes, 52, and her husband, John, 53, will look down 300 metres over a junction at Chasetown, where they graze their horses. "We just can't believe it's going to happen," she said. They have already been affected with a fall in house prices, and properties are not selling. "The people whose houses are being pulled down and forced to move out are the lucky ones."

A Department of Transport spokeswoman said Labour had not promised to stop the road. The agreement with the road's builders was "commercially confidential". The department says the £370m scheme is part of an integrated transport system for the West Midlands.



Where traffic will thunder: Hazel Barnes's bedroom will have all too good a view of the road Photograph: John Lawrence

## Born too short? It's all in the stars

By Charles Arthur  
Science Editor

Somehow, astrologers seem to have overlooked something that they should have been able to predict for ages: your eventual height depends on the month in which you were born.

A survey of more than half a million men in Austria has found that if you are born in March, you will be slightly, but significantly, taller than someone born in September.

Though the variation is just 0.6 centimetres (0.2 inches) between the peak and trough, with the average occurring for babies born in January and July, a team at the Institute of Human Biology at the University of Vienna is confident that the link exists.

They suggest that the differences, which were observed over 10 years in army conscripts aged 18, could be caused by the pineal gland,

located in the brain, which produces the hormone melatonin in reaction to the daily cycle of light and darkness.

"The underlying mechanism [of height differences] might involve the light-dependent activity of the pineal gland," said Gerhard Weber, who led the team which reports today in the science journal *Nature*.

However the link arises, it has a peculiar periodicity: the body heights vary exactly with the amount of sunshine, in a 365-day cycle, but the tallest babies are born 89 days ahead of the longest day (or possibly, the researchers suggest, 276 days after it). "This may provide empirical facts for clinical research on the pineal gland and melatonin," they say. Or it may just be another line for astrologers: "If you are born today... good news! You have a slightly better chance of becoming a supermodel."

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DETAILS CORRECT AS OF GOING TO PRESS

## Shop staff in front line against crime

By Jason Bennetto  
Crime Correspondent

SHOP workers are facing a record number of attacks, both physical and verbal, from disgruntled customers and thieves, according to a new report.

The number of robberies has also shot up by 42 per cent to 17,000 with off-licences, jewellers and petrol stations most at risk. The number of staff physically assaulted rose by 44 per cent to 13,000 and a further 177,000 were threatened with violence or subjected to verbal abuse.

The director of the fifth annual Retail Crime Survey, compiled by the British Retail Consortium, said the surge in violence against staff was "horrific".

Overall, the cost to retailers of criminal activity fell from £1.42bn to £1.38bn last year—although it still costs every household in the United Kingdom £85.

Shoplifting, or customer theft, cost shops £608m following a 14 per cent drop in the number of incidents to 4.3 million. While thefts by staff fell by 16 per cent they still account for more than half the losses.

Marks & Spencer blamed "persistent and professional" criminals for the bulk of shoplifting crimes, warning that some gangs were stealing goods worth up to £2m a year.

day. Some 54 per cent of physical attacks on staff happened when they tackled shop thieves.

Workers in chemists' shops were the most likely to be assaulted with 34 attacks per 1,000 staff last year.

Director-general of the BRC, Ann Robinson, said the rise in violence against shopworkers was "horrific" and suggested it was a reflection of a general trend towards a more violent society.

"These are very frightening experiences. Increasingly it is the people in small shops open long hours who suffer the worst effects and for the small retailer who lives over the shop the whole family can be traumatised," she said.

The shop workers' union, Usdaw, called for more action to stem the rising tide of violence.

Bill Connor, general secretary, blamed longer opening hours for the increased danger and said shop owners should do more to protect their staff, in particular installing more surveillance equipment.

"Extended opening hours in stores have undoubtedly contributed to the number of violent incidents, particularly drug and alcohol-related crimes."

Burglaries, including break-ins and ram-raids, have halved in the past five years to 87,000 incidents, costing shops £155m.

Marks & Spencer said its research showed that people who stole from shops as a "day job" were often the same criminals who burgled houses and committed violent crimes to feed a drugs habit.

VISIT YOUR LOCAL DEALER THIS  
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## Uncomfortable ride ahead for America's driverless car

by Tim Cornwell  
in Berkeley, California

IN THE car park of a Californian horse-race track, a curious spectacle is under way. A silver-grey Buick LeSabre, a comfortable sedan preferred by middle-aged, middle-class middle Americans, is careening round parked cars at speeds up to 40mph. On closer inspection, the driver is reading a newspaper. As the Buick rounds a corner, following a half-mile track of magnets buried in the Tarmac, a car wanders into its path. The dashboard emits a squeak and the Buick slows as French engineer Benedict Brougier takes the wheel and guides it off a collision course.

"Sometimes," she says, "we have ridden this car with our feet out of the window." The Buick, loaded with \$30,000 (£18,750) worth of equipment including computer-driven brakes, throttle, and steering, was developed as part of an ex-

periment in converting America's freeways into a giant Scalextric track.

The Buick and researchers at the University of California at Berkeley gathered here this week to concede that its time has not quite yet come, but say it points to the inevitable future for the family car.

Sitting in the driver's seat of the so-called driverless car was like taking a joy-ride with Hal. As the steering wheel twitched and turned in little jerks, the car cut through a narrow path of bollards, cornered at about 35mph, sped up and then slowed for a road bump, and finally threw passengers from side to side in an abrupt left-right swerve.

"Automated control on," announces a soft female computer voice. "Approaching destination." In 1994 the US government set aside \$200m in funding over seven years for a consortium of university researchers and private firms to develop a prototype Automated Highway System.

Last year, 10 Buick LeSabres drove themselves in convoy down a stretch of California motorway, at speeds of 65 mph and as little as 12 feet apart. The Clinton administration, apparently unimpressed, cut off funding this year, in favour of exploring less ambitious forms of roadway control. The system is relatively low-tech, with a magnetometer in the car following magnets sunk into the road. In theory, the car's computers take control when it enters the freeway, then hands over to the driver at the exit.

Californians increasingly complain that their lives are ruined by traffic. Engineers at the University of California are working on "intelligent transportation" projects, in collaboration with the California transport department.

Karl Hedrick, a Berkeley professor who heads the research effort, said: "We are trying to solve a congestion problem as well as a safety problem."



Sweet moment: Members of Harvard University's Hasty Pudding Theatricals Society with Kevin Kline, star of *The Ice Storm*, after forcing him to wear a wig and bra. The cross-dressing club voted him man of the year at a ceremony in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Photograph: Jim Bourg/Reuters

## Lewinsky affair comes to the boil

By John Carlin  
in Washington

AS THE crisis in Iraq comes to the boil, so does President Clinton's own political crisis at home, with the principal actors in the drama poised to appear before the grand jury in the coming week to answer questions from Kenneth Starr and his inquisitors.

Monica Lewinsky, the former White House trainee who claimed on tape to have had an affair with the President, will be taking the stand; as will Vernon Jordan, the high-powered Washington lawyer accused of helping President Clinton to urge Ms Lewinsky to lie about an affair; and possibly, according to lawyers involved in the case, Mr Clinton himself.

But while Iraq has shifted the Lewinsky affair momentarily from the front pages, the White House is feeling increasing discomfort at the President's refusal to give the "full, free and unfettered access" to the truth about his relationship with the young woman that he demands from Saddam Hussein about his weapons of mass destruction.

The normally ice-cool Mike McCurry, the President's chief spokesman, cracked under the strain on Monday when he blurted out to the *Chicago Tribune* the view that Mr Clinton's relationship with Ms Lewinsky was not "simple" and "innocent"; that he believed it had been "very complicated". Otherwise, he said, Mr Clinton would have spoken out more freely on the matter, rather

than simply provide flat denials that sex had been involved.

The White House press corps immediately assumed that his remarks marked the beginning of an attempt to present a more nuanced description of the relationship, possibly with a view to preparing the ground for an admission that their boss had been economical with the truth.

But then a rather sheepish-looking Mr McCurry appeared at a White House briefing to deliver what amounted to a public act of contrition. Describing his remarks in the *Chicago Tribune* interview as "a lapse in my sanity", he said he had placed himself in the doghouse.

But as every day goes by, it becomes more and more obvious that Mr McCurry was absolutely right; that the relationship between the President and the trainee was indeed, to put it euphemistically, very complicated. How else, for example, to explain the 37 visits Ms Lewinsky made to the White House to see the President after she had stopped working at the White House and had taken up a job requiring sensitive security clearance at the Pentagon?

If it was not sex that was involved, it must have been, as Maureen Dowd of the *New York Times* observed in a column, that the bimbo from Beverly Hills was advising the President on matters of high policy - how to resolve Asia's economic problems, how to handle the crisis with Iraq. As Ms Dowd remarked, it might be comforting to know that they only had sex.

## Oprah unseats the courthouse cowboys

THE JUDGE in the matter of the Texas cowboys vs Oprah Winfrey has ruled that a hamburger may not be libelled, writes John Carlin.

The landmark ruling, which threw into doubt the constitutional plausibility of Texas food defamation laws, was a severe setback for the cattlemen's case against the TV talk-show queen.

They are suing Ms Winfrey, the world's highest paid entertainer, for a remark she made on air in April 1996 about the possible threat of mad cow disease reaching American shores.

During an interview with an anti-meat campaigner, Ms Winfrey exclaimed: "It has just stopped me cold from eating another burger! I'm stopped!"

The following day cattle futures prices in the Chicago market fell by 10 per cent. The plaintiffs in the case, clearly in awe at La Winfrey's power, said this was no coincidence.

Their case, which is being



Winfrey: Landmark ruling

heard in the Texas pan-handle town of Amarillo, rested in large measure on a state law which holds that a hamburger, a sirloin cut, a pork chop, an orange, or a cup of coffee are sensitive, if not sentient, entities that deserve the same legal protection from libel as human beings.

Judge Mary Lou Robinson begged to differ, and the plaintiffs now have a much harder case to prove.



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# Saddam's palaces to be battleground

The Iraqi leader's many 'residences' may be out of the Arabian Nights, writes Ian Burrell, but Sandringham is far bigger

EIGHT Iraqi palaces which collectively cover an area of more than 70 square kilometres are set to be the battlegrounds of the next Gulf conflict.

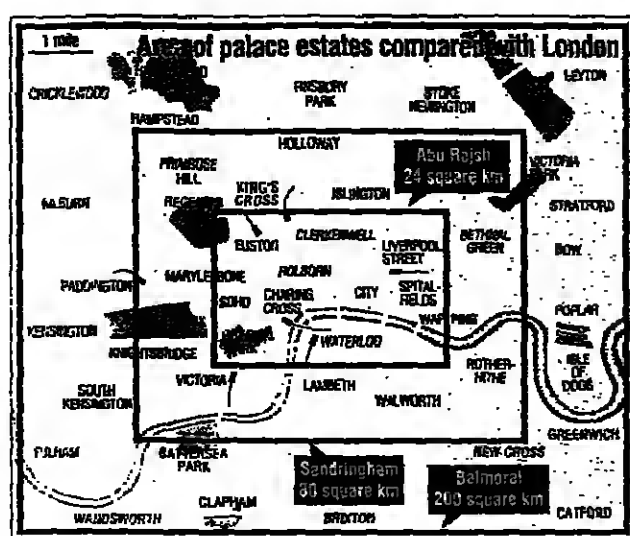
Containing in excess of 1,500 buildings, they are believed to provide an infinite number of hiding places for the precursors of chemical and biological weapons or the mobile launchers used to propel Scud-type missiles.

For nearly four months, inspectors from the UN Special Commission (Unsc) on Iraq have tried to gain entry to the palaces. But Iraq has consistently blocked access to what it calls "sovereign sites", and has even moved civilians into some of the compounds to form "human shields" against air-strikes.

Three of the palaces are in Baghdad itself, with one taking up four square kilometres of the city centre and including several hundred buildings.

Other palaces are located at Basra in southern Iraq and at Mosul in the north. The remaining three sites are in the Salahadin region, north of Baghdad, with two palaces in Saddam Hussein's home city of Tikrit and another built on a lake at Maqar-al-Tharthar.

The latter is said by one former worker to be "like the palaces in stories of *Sinbad and Arabian Nights*" and around five times as big as the White House in Washington.



An Unsc spokesman said yesterday: "We are not just talking about a marble edifice. These sites have warehouses, garages, barracks, houses and industrial facilities."

A team of Unsc surveyors in Iraq is making an assessment of the scale and significance of the eight sites for Kofi Annan, the UN secretary-general, ahead of his peace mission to Iraq tomorrow.

A senior British military source said last week that one Iraqi palace alone covered an area of nearly 25 square kilometres. It would, he said, cover an area stretching from Hyde Park to Wapping, in east London, and from Regents Park, south to Streatham.

"These are not palaces like Buckingham Palace or Balmoral," he said. "They are amazingly opulent with artificial lakes and swimming pools. They have spent a gigantic amount of money on them."

The Ministry of Defence yesterday issued a drawing of the Abu Rakash palace, 60km north of President Saddam's home city of Tikrit. Within the site, which

is approximately 6km by 4km, are four palaces, each larger than Buckingham Palace.

However, although Buckingham Palace is only 0.16 sq km, other British royal estates are far larger than the Iraqi palaces. Sandringham is more than 82 sq km, while Balmoral extends over 202 sq km.

Since the last Gulf conflict, President Saddam has spent an estimated £1bn on the eight palace sites and a further 70 presidential sites.

President Saddam's palace building programme began well before the Gulf war. A Northern Ireland construction company spoke yesterday of how it was involved in the building of the administrative palace on the banks of the Tigris in Baghdad, which was finished in 1991.

Ivan McCabrey, managing director of Mivan of Co Antrim, said that precious hardwoods and tons of marble were imported from all around the world. The palace had 110 bullet-proof windows. "Before he went to war with Kuwait, Saddam was considered a good guy," said Mr McCabrey.



'Women in Black Against War' held a vigil to protest at the threat of a new Gulf war at St Martin in the Fields, London, last night. Photograph: Peter Macdiarmid

## Annan visit is last chance to settle

By Rupert Cornwell

COUNTING on the "support and prayers" of the Security Council, the United Nations Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, is making final preparations for his make-or-break mission to Baghdad - in the words of the Foreign Secretary Robin Cook last night, "the last chance to resolve this crisis by diplomatic means".

Mr Annan was due to fly from New York to Paris, where he will hold talks this evening with President Jacques Chirac who has been trying in vain to broker a settlement of his own.

But France, though opposed to the use of force, has now warned Iraq that unless it complies with the UN weapons inspectors, it faces certain air attack from British and American forces.

From Paris, the Secretary-General flies on to Baghdad where he will stay until Sunday. This means that any onslaught will not start until Sunday night at the earliest. It could be delayed even longer, since the United States Congress is not scheduled to vote until Tuesday on a resolution approving the use of force against Baghdad. But there is no guarantee that President Bill Clinton will wait that long, if Mr Annan's attempt has plainly failed.

And he will have precious little room for manoeuvre. Although Mr Annan himself declared his chances of success to be "reasonable" and that the Iraqis seemed ready "to engage

me constructively", the US ambassador to the UN, Bill Richardson, made it clear that US patience with Baghdad's evasions and backsliding had run out.

In the Commons, Tony Blair was equally uncompromising. The success of the Annan trip depended entirely on Saddam Hussein, the Prime Minister declared, leaving no doubt of the view of Britain and the US that the Secretary-General was going with what amounted to a take-it-or-leave-it offer.

All substantial concessions, in the view of London and Washington, will have to be made by the Iraqi leader, and that Mr Annan will not be going for a bargaining session. He, himself, summed up his mandate as one of being "firm in substance and flexible in form".

Closer to ground zero of any assault meanwhile, tensions mounted and precautions gath-

ered speed. As students in Egypt and Jordan marched against an attack, the UN announced that it was sending 31 members of its staff to Iraq out of the country. For their part, the inspectors whose search for Saddam's chemical and biological weapons plants sparked the latest crisis, completed their visits to eight "presidential compounds".

A formula for UN access to these sites could provide an 11th-hour diplomatic solution to the crisis, and the Egyptian President, Hosni Mubarak, who contacted both Mr Clinton and Saddam Hussein yesterday, claimed to detect an Iraqi "understanding of the situation".

But London and Washington are insisting that no serious strings can be attached to an "Unsc-plus" scheme, whereby the inspectors would go over the plants with a toothcomb, but accompanied by other officials

or diplomats. The team had to have full and unfettered access to the sites. "Our resolve on that is right and immovable," the Prime Minister told MPs.

Earlier the Secretary of State for Defence, George Robertson, was blunter still, vowing that whatever expert doubts on the issue, air strikes would inflict "massive damage" on President Saddam's facilities, for would "human shields", as employed by the Iraqi leader during the Desert Storm bombings in 1991, be a deterrence. "We cannot account for Saddam's uncivilised and quite illegal behaviour," Mr Robertson said.

Meanwhile, Mr Cook last night said that a new UN resolution would be necessary to authorize an attack. It might be better from a legal and political point of view to update existing resolutions, but it was not "necessary".

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## Roadshow to prepare the nation for war

By John Carlin  
in Washington

THE heavyweights in the Clinton administration set off to tour the country yesterday on a campaign to prepare the United States people for war against Iraq. One thing they were not going to do was give expression to the mounting doubts in Washington and beyond about the long-term value of the project.

The Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright, Defense Secretary William Cohen and Vice House national security adviser Sandy Berger travelled to Columbus, Ohio, to address themselves to Middle America via a cosy, question-and-answer "town hall" format favoured by the charismatic boss.

Officials said that the US's Big Three foreign policy advisers would be merely expanding on the President's televised address from the Pentagon on Tuesday, when he presented a list of Saddam Hussein's historical iniquities and made the case that if the Iraqi leader did not abide by United Nations resolutions "he alone will be to blame for the consequences".

The President is speaking forcefully and carrying a big stick, but the question he has failed convincingly to address is what exactly he intends to do with his big stick if called upon to use it, and that he hopes the benefits of being President Saddam across the beach will be.

Mr Clinton trotted out his now familiar objective, namely "to seriously diminish the threat posed by Iraq's weapons of mass destruction". But what do the words "seriously" and "significantly" mean? They do not mean, as military officers have said, that Iraq's biological and chemical weapons arsenal will be eliminated. Some Iraqi civilians, on the other hand, undoubtedly will, and over the images of dead women and children are broadcast on

CNN the US will risk being perceived not as the world's policeman but as the world's thug. Senator Robert Torricelli, a Democrat closely allied to the President, has been touring the Middle East in the last week. Yesterday he said that while enthusiasm in Kuwait for a US-led strike was "palpable", elsewhere Arab public opinion was decidedly pro-Saddam. "Almost by default", he was forced to recognise, "Saddam Hussein has won the public relations war."

As for the bombing war, Republicans in Congress are becoming increasingly fidgety. "The President has yet to lay out the specific military objectives he wants to achieve with this mission and to explain how he intends to reach those goals," said Kay Bailey Hutchison, a Texas Republican senator. Senator John McCain, a Vietnam war hero, spoke for many when he applauded the "compelling case" Mr Clinton had made for forcing President Saddam to abide by international rules, but criticised him for failing to address the core question: how will the problem ever go away while Saddam remains in power?

Mr Clinton's critics say that any attempt to declare victory on the strength of, say, a four-day bombing campaign that causes only partial damage to President Saddam's power structure, kills civilians, kills US pilots and possibly consolidates Saddam's support at home and in the region would be met with the wrath of Congress and the press.

Critics also note that an air strike could defer further United Nations weapons inspections on the ground indefinitely. "Without Uncom [the UN inspection team], the whole multilateral process that the US has worked so hard to create in dealing with Iraq crumbles, collapses," a Defence Department official told the *New York Times*. "The United States will be left to deal with Iraq on its own. I can't imagine that's something that President Clinton wants."

## Strike crews on target in hours



Ready for action: Crew on board the USS George Washington in the Gulf giving the OK signal for the launching catapult to be test-fired yesterday.

Photograph: Santiago Lyon/AP

### Emma Daly reports from on board USS George Washington in the Gulf

AS TOMCATS and Hornets roar on and off the flight deck with a thunder fit to waken the dead, it is business as usual aboard the nuclear-powered USS *George Washington*. The five-year-old aircraft carrier left port on Monday after a brief respite and has returned to active duty in the Gulf, prepared if necessary to launch a wave of air strikes against Iraq.

"We really are ready to go on our mission if that's what is called for," said Rear Admiral Mike Mullen, commander of the *George Washington* battle group, which includes 12 other ships and operates alongside the USS *Independence*, another carrier, and its battle group. The admiral emphasised his ship's hope for a diplomatic solution,

but warned that the strike aircraft stationed aboard could reach their targets in Iraq within hours of any orders to attack.

As the ship has been stationed in the area since November, its pilots have flown hundreds of sorties over Iraq to enforce the no-fly zone, and know the terrain well. The F-14 Tomcat crews - a pilot and a radar officer - have even practiced bombing runs over Iraq, to the extent that officers are now trailing against complacency.

"I think we can do the job if needed be," said Lt Bryan Fetter standing in the pilots' briefing room, walls adorned with a

large-scale map of the Gulf and a home-made calendar decorated with lingerie. But, "I'd really like to see a political solution."

Lt Fetter (call-sign "Cheese", as in feta) will be charged with finding and locking on to targets in the event of a bombing run and he knows he might inflict civilian casualties. "I've thought about that," said Lt Fetter, who has yet to fire a shot in anger. "It's something I think about every time, and the conclusion I've come to is: all the targets we are targeting are military, and they are primarily to stop the chemical and biological weapons programme."

His comrade Lt Keith Parker, a Tomcat pilot, admits that every professional wants to use his training but adds: "For us, that's a life or death matter. I don't think you're going to find any warmongers."

Life aboard the USS *George Washington* will not change radically if President Bill Clinton orders an attack against Iraq, since the 70-plus aircraft aboard have been flying 100 sorties a day, armed with missiles and bombs, since last November.

The flight-deck is an extraordinarily noisy and dangerous place. During take-offs, a fear-some catapult burls aircraft af-

ter aircraft off the tiny runway; landings are noisier still, as a wire cable catches the book of an aircraft and yanks it to a dead stop. The sounds reverberate throughout the 17-deck ship - but anyone passing the engine room where the arresting gear operates is practically deafened by the screech as the cable rips out to catch the speeding jet fighter.

As each aircraft is readied for take-off, dozens of staff scurry about the deck signalling pilots or clearing debris or fixing bombs and arming missiles - including the horrifyingly expensive laser-guided smart bombs. Each crew-member in-

terviewed aboard (and there are 36 women serving on the *George Washington*, or *GW*, as it is known) seemed calm and purposeful, aware of their roles as tiny cogs in a vast military machine.

"Their spirits are high and morale is up. They understand their mission," said Admiral Mullen, who defined that mission as ensuring the long- and short-term economic stability of the region, as well as the "diminishment" of weapons of mass destruction.

It is the latter reason that strikes a chord with the crew. If the order to attack comes, "It won't ruin my cruise," muttered one ordnance man. "I just don't think they should be using those weapons."

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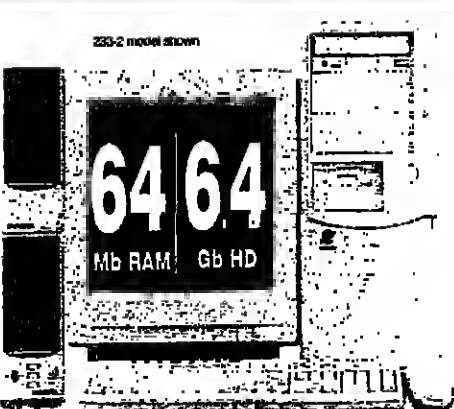
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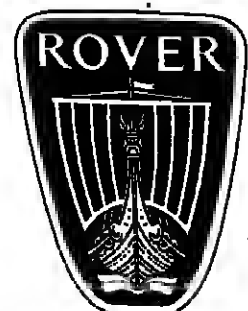




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Website uses real testimonials to 'illustrate' Cyprus abuses

## Turks plagiarise Amnesty appeal

By Robert Fisk  
Middle East Correspondent

A TURKISH CYPRIOT pressure group has shamelessly plagiarised an Amnesty document on human rights abuses in Colombia, Indonesia and Bosnia to advertise alleged rape and murder by Greek Cypriots during the 1974 war.

The "Turkish Action Group", which is believed to have its headquarters in Ankara, substituted Turkish Cypriot names in place of Colombian and Bosnian rape victims in a four-page account of the violent repression exacted upon Turkish Cypriot women in 1974, the year Turkish troops invaded and divided the island of Cyprus following a coup d'état by the Greek military regime.

The original Amnesty paper was an emotional open letter last year from David Bull, the director of the human rights organisation, urging readers to join Amnesty and outlining for them - in graphic detail - the brutal rape of Sonebia Pinzon and her daughter Marcela and an unnamed elderly Bosnian Muslim woman who was sexually abused by Serbian militiamen. "What do the words 'women and children first' mean to you?" his letter began. "That innocent women and children caught up in some terrible situation beyond their control, must be protected from danger at all costs? That was my understanding too. But 'women and children first' has taken on

a whole new meaning for me since I began reading reports on the subject here at Amnesty International."

The Turkish Action Group's pamphlet begins with these identical words but continues by saying that the (anonymous) author's response "took on a whole new meaning for me since I began reading reports and documents on Cyprus ..."

It goes on to substitute Sonebia Pinzon's name with that of the "Derya family". Here is the Amnesty version: "Don't say 'I can't read this', because there is a purpose to my telling you. If the Pinzon family can get through it, then so can you and I. The [Colombian] soldiers don't waste a second. They have a job to do. It begins with Sonebia. They tear at her clothes ... the stone is cold against her back as they take it in turns to rape her. She whispers to her little boy not to look, but he's frightened, he wants to hold his mummy's hand."

And here is the Turkish version: "Don't say 'I can't read this' ... If the Derya family can go through it, so can you and I. Soldiers don't waste a second. They have a job to do. It begins with Mrs Derya. They tear at her clothes ... the stone is cold against her back as they take it in turns to rape her. She whispers to her little boy not to look, but he is frightened, he wants to hold his mother's hand."

In identical words, the Turks describe the rape of one of Mrs Derya's daughters - in the original Amnesty version, the sec-

ond rape victim is Sonebia's daughter Marcela. Mr Bull's account of the rape of an elderly Bosnian woman by Serbs states that: "She was forced to stand with seven other women. One of the men, whom she knew, forced his hand up inside her until she bled." The Turkish version claims that a Greek Cypriot forced an elderly Turkish Cypriot woman (also unnamed) "to stand with two other women while one of the men forced his hand up inside her until she bled."

To Amnesty's fury, this crude counterfeit had also turned up on a website served by British Telecom, which told Amnesty that it had "no power" to have the material removed. Neil Durkin, an Amnesty spokesman, told *The Independent*: "We've contacted a QC, and taken advice, but we were advised that this would cost a great deal of money and would grant this [Turkish] organisation publicity that we would not wish to give them."

There are two ironies to this sad story. The first is that during and after the 1974 Turkish invasion of Cyprus, both sides committed human rights abuses, which were fully documented by Amnesty. The second is that the descriptions of rape in the Turkish document are so similar to those in the Amnesty letter that they defy credibility. Like most human rights groups, Amnesty uses the Internet. Clearly, however, the opportunities for misuse are just as great.



Heavy hype: Rock legends Jimmy Page (left) and Robert Plant of Led Zeppelin in Zagreb yesterday to launch a European tour promoting *Walking into Clarksdale*, their first album of original songs for 20 years. The tour opens in the Croatian city on Saturday. Photograph: Nicola Solic

## Soviet Union devised 'men only' anthrax bomb

By Phil Reeves in Moscow

THE SOVIET Union, which for decades supplied arms to Iraq, may have engineered a biological "sex bomb" - a form of anthrax that specifically attacks the core of any army, adult males. That, at any rate, is the claim levelled by a former environmental official investigat-

ing the worst accident in the history of biological weapons.

Sergei Volkov has been examining an incident in April 1979 at Sverdlovsk (now Yekaterinburg) in which a cloud of poison escaped from a biological weapons production plant. The victims, stricken with internal bleeding, died within a day.

For years, the Soviet author-

ities maintained that the anthrax outbreak came from bad beef at a local market. But in 1992 Boris Yeltsin - head of the regional Communist Party when the catastrophe happened - confirmed suspicions that it involved biological weapons.

Although the KGB confiscated the victims' death certificates and hospital records, Mr Volkov

managed to obtain documents. After interviewing scores of residents, he claims the death toll was close to 1,000, ten times the official count. He also says he has confirmed suggestions that men were three times more likely to contract the disease, and that no children were affected.

Mr Volkov's cause has been championed by Lev Fyodorov,

a chemist who played a part in exposing Russia's chemicals weapons programme four years ago. In claims which raise questions about the contents of Iraq's arsenal, the two men yesterday said the anthrax germs may have been engineered to attack adult males. Alternatively, some other disease, possibly viral, may have been involved.

## Loo that washes without a wipe

By Richard Lloyd Parry  
in Tokyo

OF ALL the brilliant innovations to have come out of Japan, none is so esteemed by its own people, but so misunderstood by the rest of the world, as the Toto Washlet. Raw fish, Tamagotchi, the Sony Walkman - all, after initial resistance have become a part of life in the West. Now the drive is on to export in large numbers the gadget described by one foreign resident of Tokyo as "the loo that shoots back".

In appearance, the Washlet is nothing more than a hi-tech lavatory. The secret is beneath the rim where, as well as a heating element to the seat, it contains a small nozzle.

By operating an instrument panel at the side, it is possible to project between the cheeks a jet of water in a range of temperatures and pressures. Another button triggers an air jet which blow-dries the thoroughly cleansed bottom. Just as offices

have become "paperless", so too can lavatories.

It was launched in 1980 with the slogan: "Your bottom will like it after three tries. Don't let people say behind your back that you have a dirty bottom." The Washlet has quickly become a Japanese institution: the original manufacturer, Toto, has sold 10 million units, and bottom-cleansing loos sell 2.2 million a year at a starting price of 75,000 yen (£360).

Outside Asia, however, they have failed to cause a splash. The Swiss top the league, with 2,500 purchases a year, but Americans buy only 5,000, and elsewhere numbers are insignificant.

In response to this humiliation, Toto is launching an aggressive marketing campaign called "Using Is Believing", and is planning to install the gadgets in lavatories at 600 bathroom centres outside Japan "so people can actually try them out and see for themselves how nifty they really are".

## US wrestlers welcomed in Tehran

MEMBERS of a United States wrestling team went shopping at a Tehran bazaar yesterday, attracting Iranian well-wishers eager to have their photos taken with the first American sports team in Iran since the 1979 revolution.

The five sportsmen will take part in a two-day freestyle wrestling competition in Tehran starting today, a prospect that has raised comparisons with a ground-breaking visit of American table tennis players to China in the 1970s.

"The visit to the bazaar was terrific. People were very friendly."

"They said hello to us and asked for our pictures to be taken," said Larry Sciacchitano, president of USA Wrestling, the governing body of US amateur wrestling.

John Giura, a former World Cup champion, said he was thrilled with Tehran, particularly the snow-capped Alborz mountain range which overlooks the bustling city of about 7 million people.

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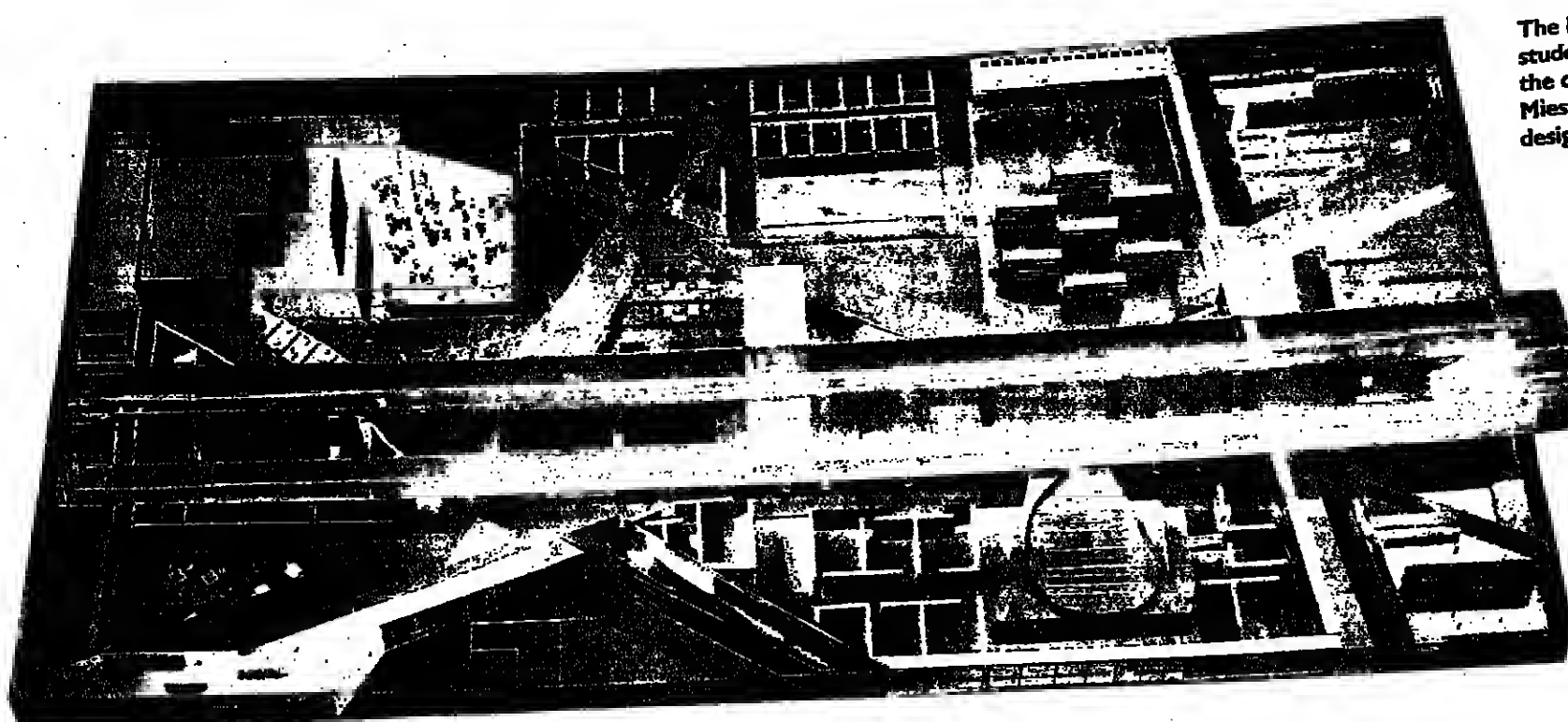
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STARTS TOMORROW AT CINEMAS ACROSS THE COUNTRY



# Rem's Dutch courage

How do you modernise the arch-modernist? This was the task facing Dutch-born Rem Koolhaas when he won the competition to overhaul Mies van der Rohe's Illinois Institute of Technology. Nonie Niesewand hails his free-thinking, innovative solution



The low-rise student campus in the centre of the Mies van der Rohe designed IIT

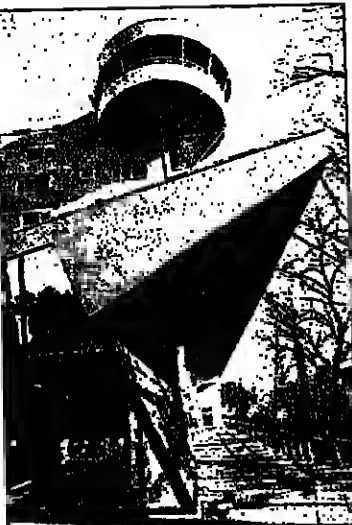
For the city that invented the skyscraper, the choice of Rem Koolhaas to build a new \$25m campus centre at the Illinois Institute of Technology is surprising. A one-storey, rectangular building, wrapped in glass walls then covered by a contoured concrete roof, the centre will be surrounded by 18 beautifully proportioned, modular buildings by Mies van der Rohe, who designed and taught at the IIT architectural school, Crown Hall. Now this world-famous statement of modernism, a shrine to its maker, is - dare I say? - to be modernised by the 52-year-old Dutch-based Koolhaas, who won an international competition inviting 36 architects to design a new building on the campus. Thirty nine responded and five were shortlisted. As commissions go, it's as challenging as asking Lucien Freud to paint over the Sistine Chapel.

Koolhaas admits that Mies dominates the campus but that "the buildings don't really look like Mies, it's almost factory life accommodation, quite forbidding." Worse still, like all sixty-somethings, it's showing its age. "Quite tatty" in the words of John Zukowsky of the department of art and architecture at the Institute, who believes it was wartime scripping and saving and the lack of skilled labour that affected its weathering. Hence the competition.

Mies is the mid-century modernist who invented that oft quoted definition of the movement, "less is more". Post-modernist Robert Venturi topped it with "less is a bore". So how did Koolhaas express the next -ism for the 21st century?

More or less subversively. The ground plan is the criss-crossing 60-year-old footpath carved by nomadic students trailing from the dormitories on the east to the lecture theatre on the west. In the intersections created by the trajectories, Rem Koolhaas plans oases that will house shops, offices, meeting rooms, dining rooms, sports facilities. As one competition juror, K Michael Hays, rather unfortunately put it: "Koolhaas has made a very permeable scheme that allows student activities to rub up against each other." All on one level. Eventually, the project will include new housing, and an overhaul of the campus grounds.

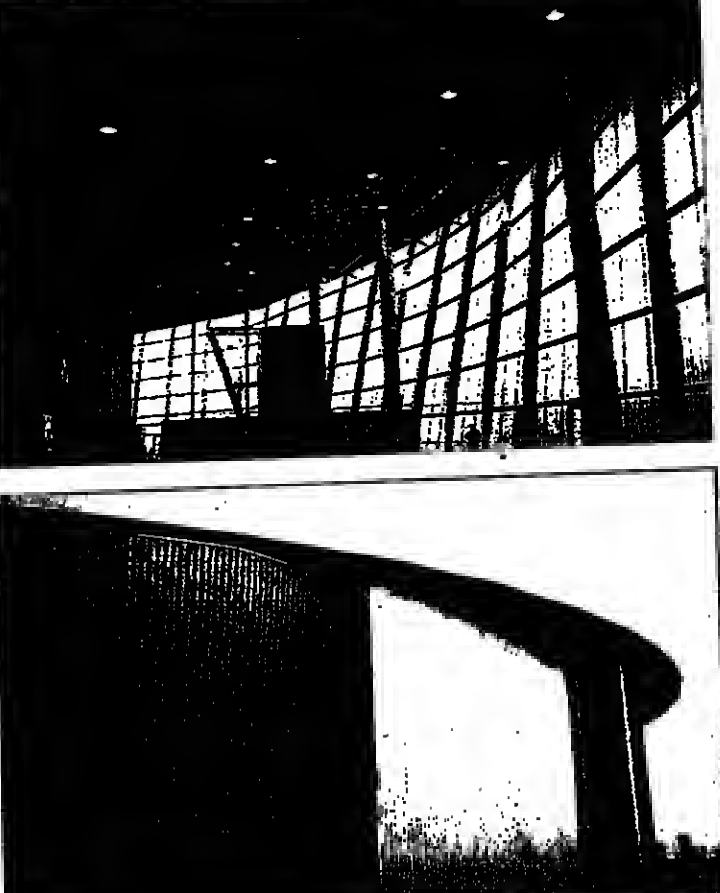
Floating above in a stainless steel tube, 150 meters long, is the elevated railroad, the EL, as Chicagoans af-



Buildings with lift-off from Rem Koolhaas/OMA: the angular Byzantium flats in Amsterdam, above; the Grand Palais in Lille, right, combines concert hall, convention centre and display space within its rounded form, and helped catapult a provincial town into an international exhibitions centre  
Photographs: Zbigniew Kosci, Stephen Cluett/Architectural Association

fectionately call it. Functionally, cladding it in a tube cuts the noise. Symbolically, it marks history moving on and leaving tracks. How the competitors dealt with the EL was critical. Other practices shortlisted for the final phase of the competition were Peter Eisenmann of New York, Zaha Hadid of London, Helmut Jahn with Werner Sobek of Chicago and Stuttgart, and Kazuyo Sejima and Ryue Nishizawa of Tokyo, "all with modernist affinities and future-oriented ambitions", as Rem describes them.

It's not the first time that Koolhaas has turned architecture on its side. Or head. Sometimes in his rapid-fire lectures - always over subscribed, with queues round the block - slides are screened upside down. "It doesn't matter," says Rem. Take skyscrapers. The taller the building the thicker the base has to be to support it. But not for Koolhaas. With Ove Arup engineer Cecil Balmond, he configures 300m tower blocks supported by slender concrete columns. Sometimes the



towers lean outwards, like the tower at Pisa. By clustering and intersecting them he can support lift shafts on wire sculptures and brace tower blocks on tallfins like space rockets. The effect is that of light refracting. Never a blank, glassy box.

This kind of free-thinking is why he won. Phyllis Lambert, a leading architectural curator, and a juror, confirmed the judges' unanimous choice of Rem Koolhaas. "You don't clone Mies. You can't clone Mies."

Though many adjectives - unwavering, seamless, a master at solutions of collision and intersection, tectonic, episodic, a pragmatist - used to describe Rem Koolhaas are true, listeners at his lectures are struck by the emotion and enthusiasm with which he expresses an idea. About three years ago he nearly closed OMA, his practice in Rotterdam, for lack of work. OMA stands for the Office for Metropolitan Architecture - "Sure it's a very pretentious title, after which any realisation may be found wanting," Rem says. But he persevered, and wrote *SMLXL*, an

## Back to the drawing board

Architectural competitions are crucial to architects. They can make or break their careers. There's nothing new about the idea. Historically, many public buildings have been chosen by competition. Edinburgh's New Town was the result of a competition in 1767. So were the Houses of Parliament in 1835, won by Barry and Pugin. But now competition is compulsory for new public buildings in Europe. So Sir Norman Foster won the Reichstag in Berlin and the Millennium Bridge across the Thames to link St Paul's with the new Tate at Bankside - which was itself a prize for the Swiss duo Herzog and de Meuron. Other foreigners who will build for Britain include Daniel Libeskind with both the Spiral extension to the V&A and the Imperial War Museum in Manchester; and Norwegian Nard Stokke Wijn at the Edinburgh Architecture Centre. We still don't know who will win the competition to design Wembley Stadium, but Loeb Partners came first for the main stadium at the Sydney Olympics.

The Chicago IIT campus contest that Rem Koolhaas won (see left) was a very polite affair. The four finalists who lost had the blow softened by \$20,000 payments. In France and Germany, where public buildings have to be selected from open competitions, shortlisted architects can be paid between £5,000 and £150,000. In Britain it's seldom more than £2,000.

Other competitions, such as the process to find a design for the Scottish Parliament building at Holyrood in Edinburgh, are not shaping up so well. No sooner had Donald Dewar, Secretary of State for Scotland, announced that it would be built at Holyrood, a World Heritage Site, than he moved swiftly to give "architects throughout Scotland, Britain and indeed Europe, the opportunity to bid for the chance to design the Parliament".

"It's a tender, not a competition,

to find the architect for the Scottish Parliament," Richard Haut, publisher of the weekly architectural and design *Competitions* listings throughout Europe believes. The first stage will be completed by the end of March, when applications from design and architectural firms are due at the Scottish Office. These firms are designed to weed out all but the bigger practices. So the first question on the application to the Scottish Office asks how much experience the practice has in designing £50m buildings. Asking this will "disenfranchise many architects", as the Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland provocatively asserts.

But Richard Haut is optimistic that architects without the £50m building behind them can hitch up with a structural engineer to get in their initial application. Even if the Scottish Office is looking in the first instance "for architects with a proven ability in producing buildings of the quality, complexity, and sensitivity we are looking for on the Holyrood site", the £50m question is hardly in the spirit of their stated intention to hold an international design competition. This procedure will allow the Scottish Office to choose an architect, rather than a design. It should have been dropped for an open competition in which architects registered in the UK were invited to submit sketched designs anonymously against a brief.

Holyrood hopefuls will have to get their skates on. Scottish architects suspect that the four practices which were engaged - and paid - by the Scottish office to make feasibility studies of the potential sites will be shortlisted for the building itself. Eight other names are expected to go forward into the first round, which closes at the end of March.

The RIAS has expressed disappointment at the rush - "After 300 years for a building with an expected lifespan of hundreds of years, what are a few hundred days?" NN

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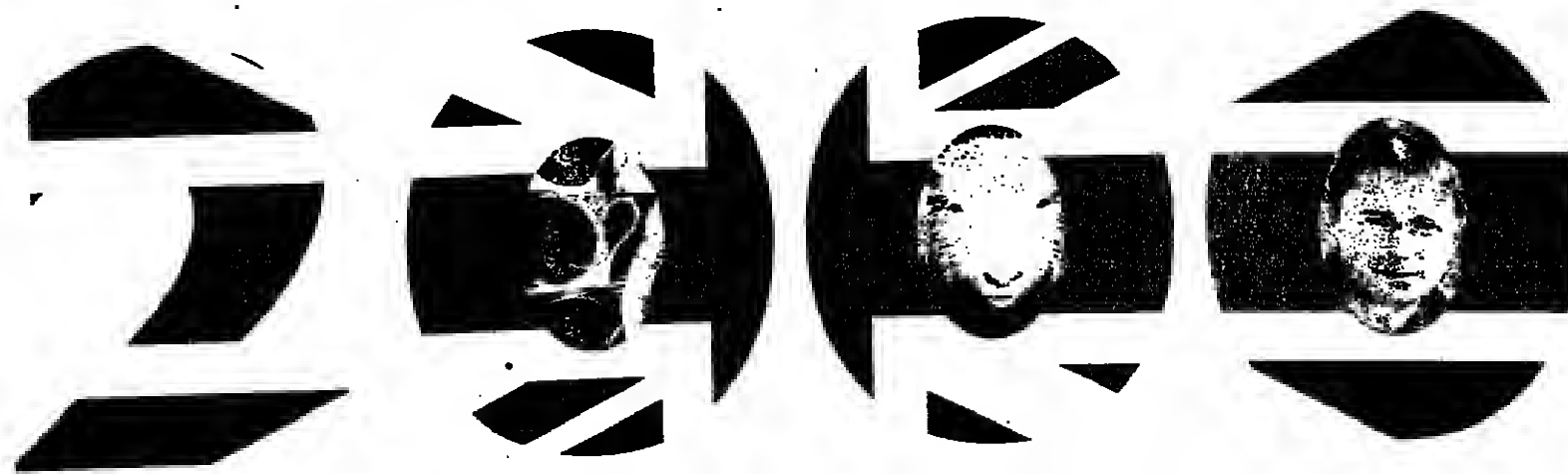
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## Welcome to the Domes, have a complimentary Ketchup

Yesterday Ted Hughes called for the Dome to be a giant model of a brain. Nonsense, says Tim Hulse, there are some far better, less cerebral, options



"One way of giving the Millennium Dome the chance to be the most astonishing building on earth is to take full advantage of its shape and make it into a giant model of the human brain," suggested the Poet Laureate, Ted Hughes, yesterday. It's an interesting idea, but somehow you can't help but feel that Ted is a bit out of touch with the current preoccupations of the average man and woman in the street.

With the plea made by the Government for suggestions for cultural icons to be installed in the Dome, my own proposal is to take full advantage of the Dome's shape and use it as the embodiment of one of the cultural icons of our age. But one Dome alone would not suffice. No, we should duplicate it, thus making it into a giant model of the breasts of Melinda Messenger, *The Sun's* Page Three Girl for the Millennium. The resulting Double Dome (or Double-D Dome) will not only be a fitting celebration of one of the leading icons of our age, but will also mean that there will be twice as much room inside. And in order to avoid the in-

evitable complaints of sexism, this huge structure will be supported by giant columns in the shape of Robert Carlyle taking his clothes off in *The Full Monty*.

Once inside, visitors will be able to gaze in admiration at the icons which make us proud to be British. Take food, for instance. It may well be the case that British food is despised by most of our fellow members of the free world, but what do they know? Obviously our traditional roast beef is slightly tainted at the moment, but we still know how to innovate. I'm talk-

ing about chips. We've already had the oven chip (looks like a chip, tastes like cardboard). Then came the micro-chip (looks like a chip, tastes like cardboard, but is ready in a fraction of the time). And now we have... the Ketchup! Yes indeed, a chip that tastes like cardboard, but has ketchup on the inside. Rule Britannia.

Freshly-cooked Ketchups will be handed to visitors as they enter the Dome's Sports area. Since sport is our new religion, it is perhaps best represented in the semi-divine form of Glenn

Hoddle. Whether the England manager will have ascended to full sainthood by the time of the Dome's opening depends on what happens in France this summer, but in any case, I suggest he should be pictured together with Paul Gascoigne in a kind of Madonna and Child pose. A special water-pumping system will enable a constant stream of tears to fall from the baby Gascoigne's eyes.

And speaking of Paul Gascoigne, we of course come to the Teletubbies. They will stand on a bright green hill surrounded

by flowers and the rotting corpses of Buzz Lightyear and the Power Rangers. The size of each Teletubby will be scaled according to popularity, which, in my experience, means that Lala will be one hundred feet tall and visitors should be careful not to tread on Tinky Winky.

Beneath the bright green hill on which the Teletubbies stand will be a narrow tunnel leading to a small, cramped space in which a real-life environmental protester lives 24 hours a day without any of the benefits of the advances in science and

technology during the 20th century. Visitors will have the opportunity to crawl down the tunnel and attempt to persuade the protester to come out.

Just beyond the Teletubbies' bright green hill will be a bright green meadow on which Dolly the iconic sheep gambols merrily together with a pig with 16 legs, a cow with 12 udders, a headless chicken and a minister without a portfolio.

Leaving this celebration of British scientific achievement by means of an escalator that periodically breaks down, visitors

will enter the Heritage area, in which a beacon of light shines eternally upon a commemorative Princess Diana mug emblazoned with a gold sticker bearing the solemn words of the royal motto: "A percentage of the proceeds of the sale of this mug will be donated to the Princess Diana Memorial Fund. Or not, as the case may be."

This sombre mood will be lifted, however, by the sight of a huge Union Jack symbolising the rebirth of Britain as a nation. The flag will be held aloft by an honorary member of the English cricket team's travelling barny army who is suffering from the effects of acute sunburn and a few too many cans of Red Stripe. The patriotic theme will be enhanced by the playing of well-known Britpop classics interspersed at regular intervals by a rousing rendition of "It's Coming Home".

Finally, on leaving the Dome, visitors will be confronted by an enormous video wall displaying one of the world's few remaining mysteries: Tony Blair's smile. Now if that's not astonishing, I don't know what is.



هكذا من الأصل

# Children in the House



While the majority of new MPs have declared their support for improved childcare, the Commons itself has nothing to offer them. By Fran Abrams

DO YOU remember those irritating notices people used to put up in offices, saying: "You don't have to be mad to work here, but it helps"? Well, the House of Commons crèche debate is a bit like that. Most MPs agree they would definitely have to be mad to bring their children to parliament each day. But many of them would happily drape Big Ben with banners demanding the right to do so.

For the second time in four years, the House of Commons is about to commission a survey to gauge the demand for childcare facilities in Westminster. Yesterday 200 MPs tabled a Commons motion welcoming the move and pressing for Parliament to set an enlightened example to other employers. After all, they point out, they are not the only people working there.

Ask them to discuss the issue, though, and a complex picture emerges. In fact, new Labour seems to be suffering from something of a neurosis about it.

Most new MPs in the House are genuinely and strongly committed to the idea of improving childcare in Britain, and they think the House of Commons should lead the way. But many Labour women shrink from discussing it because they fear they are about to feature in yet another headline about "Blair's Babies".

And that reticence still remains, especially among women MPs of child-bearing age. For whatever reason, neither Ruth Kelly nor Claire Curtis-Thomas, both of whom have had babies since last May, returned *The Independent's* calls on the issue of childcare. Nor did Debra Shipley or Jacqui Smith, both of whom have been reported to be expecting at the moment.

Just after the election, when Female Fever in the House was at its height, to ask whether the House of Commons should have a crèche was to provoke irritation. "Who would want to bring a child into central London?" would come the reply. "You media types can't seem to get it into your heads that most MPs live at the other end of the country."

Now, though, a large number of MPs hope there will be a serious discussion about childcare. And with the launch of *The Independent's* campaign, calling on the Chancellor to make childcare more affordable for all women through next

month's Budget, the issue has become particularly topical.

Before the election, childcare for those working at Westminster was to some extent a stick with which to beat the Conservative government. In 1994 a survey commissioned from Research Services Limited found that there was a demand for childcare among Parliament's 3,500 or so staff, though less so from MPs.

A cursory search for accommodation turned nothing up, and so the idea was quietly dropped, although the episode did lead to some staff with children under five being offered £6 per day childcare vouchers. Then someone spotted that there was a rifle range in the House, and a media furore ensued. The fact that the rifle range was in a cellar and therefore totally unsuitable for housing children was ignored, as was the fact that no one had decided precisely what sort of facilities were needed.

Since the election, the atmosphere seems to have changed. Research Services has been asked to update its work, and MPs are taking a new line.

Caroline Flint, Labour MP for Don Valley, gathered signatures for yesterday's motion. While she would not want childcare at Westminster for her three children, aged nine, 11 and 12, she said, others might.

"It isn't about MPs saying, 'What's in it for me?' It's about saying Parliament should set an example by listening to staff and trying to meet their needs," she said.

Ms Flint, who set up a day nursery at Lambeth Council before becoming an MP and who is a former chairwoman of Working for Childcare, recognises that there is work to be done. But she feels there is a point of principle to be made.

"We are saying that Parliament can take a lead and show other employers what possibly can be done," she said.

Different MPs have different needs and different views on the subject, of course. Tom Brake, the Liberal Democrat MP for Carshalton and Wallington, travels to work on the train each day with his seven-month-old daughter, Julia, and would be delighted if he could move her from her private nursery to a parliamentary crèche. His partner works nearby and takes Julia home when she finishes work.

"We would definitely switch," Mr Brake said. "It would be great to have the flexi-

bility of having someone on site if there was an emergency, or just to be able to drop in and check she's okay."

He has tabled his own Commons motion, which suggests the Government could act straight away by taking a few places in nurseries run by civil service departments such as the Department of Trade and Industry.

Such facilities would be useless to MPs like Lynne Jones, Labour MP for Selly Oak. When she arrived in 1992, her younger son was two and might have been a candidate for a nursery, she says, but now he is eight and his requirements are different. Most of the time, he and his 15-year-old brother are at school in Birmingham, but this week is half term and they are spending time with their mother in London.

"I've just taken them to the Planetarium," she said. "It's a nice opportunity to spend time with them, and it's a break for them too. But this is the first year I've been able to do this, because they are old enough now to entertain themselves for half the day."

What she would have welcomed a year or so ago would have been a drop-in facility, or some sort of holiday scheme. And indeed, it seems that such a programme may now be on the cards at Westminster. The European Parliament, which provides both nurseries and holiday play schemes, has been advising the House of Commons about what might be needed.

Of course, they are light years ahead on the continent. There are nurseries in Luxembourg, Strasbourg and Brussels, open until 8pm, and in school holidays children in Brussels and Luxembourg are bussed out of town to play sports and take part in other activities.

Sarah Whittall, the European Parliament's liaison officer for childcare, has been advising House of Commons officials. But she says the nurseries it runs are mainly for staff. "We do have a few members who bring their children, but with the lifestyle they have, it isn't terribly suitable. Moving a child to a different country once a month isn't a good idea," she explained.

The problem of MPs' working habits is not quite as acute at Westminster but there are still many late nights.

"There was a debate as to whether we should keep the crèche open late, but really you would have to keep it open all night. For the child it would be totally ridiculous to take them home at midnight," Ms Whittall said.

While Spanish and Italian kids seem to thrive on being up late at night, British parents like to see their offspring tucked up by about 7pm, so the idea of a late-night nursery would probably not find favour here.

Even a day nursery is bound to run up against problems, in particular because there is still nowhere to put it. The grandiose architecture of Parliament may be suited to political conniving and lofty debate, but most MPs agree it is hardly a place for children - though some point out that burgers on the menu and the odd nappy-changing facility would not go amiss.

A tie-up with a civil service department

or with St Thomas's Hospital, across the river, has been mooted, although those organisations can fill their nursery spaces easily without any help. A nursery in the new MPs' office block which is about to be built next door to Parliament has also been suggested, though a Commons spokeswoman said yesterday that the plans were too advanced to be changed.

With 120 women in the House and many more MPs under 40 than before the election, the movement for change is growing. Meanwhile, though, some MPs are still struggling to come to terms with modern attitudes to parenthood. Ashok Kumar, the Labour member for Middlesbrough South and Cleveland East, signed a motion last year calling for childcare in the Commons. So what did he think should be done about it?

"I think that's for the women to put forward," he said. "It's mostly women who deal with these issues, and we have to think what's convenient for them." Perhaps Tony Blair should go back to basics and start off with a few awareness-raising sessions.



Young blood: Tom Brake MP and his seven-month-old daughter, Julia. He would welcome crèche facilities at Westminster Photograph: Tom Pilstone

## DILEMMAS

### Approach friendships in a spirit of giving, rather than taking



VIRGINIA IRONSIDE

THERE were two great sulkers in history. One was Achilles who, after Agamemnon had pinched his girl, Briseis, during the Trojan Wars, sulked in his tent and refused to fight; the other was Eeyore, the grumpy donkey in *Winnie the Pooh* who got even more sulky than usual when everyone in the Hundred Acre Wood forgot his birthday.

Interestingly, they're both male, because generally sulking is seen as a female characteristic. Achilles was thought to be womanly because he sulked. And sulking is a typical manipulative weapon used by people who feel powerless or feel that others aren't taking them seriously - in other words, understandably, women and children.

Sulking, with its potent mixture of anger and unhappiness, is something you

Gill finds she can make friends easily but constantly destroys the relationships by finding fault and sulking. She has had to reorganise her life socially and at work to avoid ex-friends she has hurt deeply. She says she was spoilt as an only child, but how can she stop this destructive behaviour?

experience only over personal slights; you wouldn't sulk about the Conservative Party, for instance. And sulking is always damaging to everyone around you, including yourself as I, an arch sulker, know to my cost. It's as if you find yourself exuding poison gas, but gas which unfortunately you have to inhale yourself. Mary is the happy dinner party I have completely ruined by sulking.

And the worst thing about sulking is that it's so difficult to get out of by yourself. You feel you've shoved yourself down a railway siding and until someone tows you out - usually by being very kind to you or apologising - you're stuck up a dead end, stifled by your own misery and rage.

Gill is right to worry, however. It's highly unlikely that every friend she makes really

puts her down at any time. There are very few sadists around and on the whole we prefer to make people happy rather than sad or angry.

So why does she behave like this? When she says she was spoilt as an only child she may be speaking the truth. But "spoilt" in this sense usually means indulged rather than damaged. But the indulgence shown to an only child can be damaging. It can be extremely difficult, if you have no brothers and sisters, to learn the skill of being with other people, and to realise that when they make a chance thoughtless remark or are five minutes late that they're not trying to make you feel small or unwanted.

Since it's so rarely happened to you that anyone has been thoughtless, when it hap-

pens you interpret the incident, quite understandably, as a huge insult.

Sulking, however, is also connected to fear. A courageous person would stand up for themselves when they felt put upon and sort the situation out on the spot. Sulkers are frightened of showing their anger directly - partly because as "spoilt" only children it was difficult to be angry in a family in which there were no other children on your side against two adults.

I think few people except only children quite understand the terror that can be involved when being so alone and vulnerable in a family world consisting entirely of adults who, because there aren't enough children to make their presence felt, can often behave very selfishly.

Gill could go to a counsellor to find out why these feelings arise; she could learn the art of apology, at least, when she's finished sulking; or she could resolve, in future, never to ask what her friends can do for her but rather, what she can do for her friends.

When she approaches friendship in this giving rather than taking state she may find she never sulks again. But she must find out why she has this fault in her system - for that's all that it is - that prompts her sulking, if only to prevent the

horrible damage she is doing not just to her friends but to herself.

#### WHAT READERS SAY

How about taking preventive action in future and warning future friends of her propensity to sulk?

I did this and funnily enough it never happened again, but at least my friends would have been prepared for it if it had and could have joked me out of it.

Gill should see this as a weakness like an illness. If you're epileptic you'd warn friends you might have a fit, after all, so why not warn them about sulking so at least they're prepared and won't take it so personally if it happens.  
*J Flood, Bristol*

Gill should grow up fast. She's no longer a child, though she's behaving like one. Why not try behaving like an adult?

She should write to all the friends she's hurt, asking their forgiveness. She should also say that she's now realised it's a pattern which she's trying hard to break.

She should then say she'd like to meet these friends individually so she can not only discuss what went wrong -

she'll learn a lot from that - but also so she could apologise in person. No, not all the friends will respond immediately, but I'm sure Gill will feel better just by writing the letters and getting some control back in her life.

Sulking is usually a very self-destructive, passive emotion indulged in by weak people. You'll get far more respect from your friends and maybe some of them back.  
*Caroline H, Derby*

Get some psychotherapy, privately if necessary. If you cannot find out on your own why you are behaving this way, you need professional help if you are not to continue this pattern throughout your life.

It is currently fashionable to rubbish all forms of therapy/counselling. I self-destructed for the first 35 years of my life - I then went through psychotherapy and frankly, it saved my life. Do it, you won't regret it.

*Sara Bulmer, Lincolnshire*

Why continue sulking? What is the connection with being spoilt as a child? Gill already has a great deal of self-awareness about her behaviour and this will help her understand and change it. The difficulty is that the behaviour was probably an early childhood defence, perhaps against anger

or guilt; a defence which has long since become inappropriate to her needs.

Gill recognises her sulking to be cyclical in nature and becoming increasingly detrimental to her life. Gill needs to recognise that she needs to change in order to be able to move on. But old habits die hard.

Gill has made the initial steps by recognising she has a difficulty. She is beginning to

take responsibility for herself. However, I think she will need outside help to make further progress. A counsellor will listen and appreciate and understand without giving advice, or minimising what is involved. A counsellor would hear everything Gill says and be non-judgmental. This process might go some way to helping her understand her behaviour and change it.  
*Nicholas E Gough, Swindon*

#### NEXT WEEK'S DILEMMA

My nephew is a plump child; his parents, my sister and brother-in-law, give him free access to the biscuit tin and snacks.

Although well-educated they appear to have a blind spot when it comes to diet, to the extent that one parent eats no vegetables and the other doesn't believe in fruit. Consequently the children are being fed a diet of fat and starchy foods; each Saturday night they go to McDonald's.

They are delightful children and it is breaking my heart to think of the dietary and health problems which are being stored up for the fu-

ture. I dare not say anything as we have a good relationship with them and don't want to rock the boat.  
*Eva*

Letters are welcome, and everyone who has a suggestion quoted will be sent a bouquet from *Interiors*.

Send your comments and suggestions to me at the Features Department, *The Independent*, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL (fax 0171-293 2182), by Tuesday morning.

And if you have a dilemma of your own that you would like to share, please let me know.



## Let's raise a glass to Kohl, a man who played the game



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BY their enemies, ye shall know them. By the time Helmut Kohl arrived at Guildhall last night to receive the Freedom of the City of London, a fearsome opposition – of pen-pushers and last-ditchers – had formed. It consisted of the United Kingdom Stop-the-World-I-Want-to-Get-Off Party, a junior lecturer from that home of lost causes, the University of Oxford, and a whey-faced jokesmith from a Tory newspaper whose idea of humour is that Germans would throw the Chancellor out of the window if only they could find one big enough (sidesplitting, ja?). Anti-German sentiment is these days confined to a band of malcontents, reactionaries, hack writers for foreign-owned newspapers, Jungos and little Englanders. They are boorish yes, but would be worth apologising for only if Helmut Kohl were not seasoned in the occasional discomforts of democratic politics. To his country's credit, he is.

The war, let's not forget, finished 53 years ago; Britain has been a fellow

member with Germany of the European Union (Community as was) for the past 23. There are – as long as the liberal world order lasts – profound convergences of interest between our two countries. Among the differences is justifiable British caution over membership of the European Monetary Union. But relations with Germany are in pretty good nick and even if he were not a figure of historic dimensions, the German Chancellor would be an honoured and welcome visitor.

We can, let's hope, dispense with grandiose talk about competing "models". The idea, propagated by a Labour Prime Minister as well as Tory predecessors, that there is a shining and exportable British path to economic salvation is nonsense. British macroeconomic circumstances are currently favourable; beyond that it would be tempting fate to go. Germany meanwhile has 5 million unemployed, which at this stage in the economic cycle is dismaying. A friendly but objective analyst

would fault the Chancellor and his Christian Democrats for a failure of imagination, together with the sclerosis in the policy process imposed by Germany's federal constitution. That same friendly analyst would also register the maturity of German political conversation and the way all parties are seeking a way forward and respect Germany's determination not to throw out the baby of social peace with the bathwater of economic stagnation. When Germans, on all sides, say their country has no appetite for *Kapitalismus pur*, we are in no position to disagree.

There is moreover a special reason why Helmut Kohl deserves decoration. Britain helped create the entity of the German federal republic; we have an ineradicable interest in European peace and stability. We have no choice but to delight in the strength of the vision he has offered his fellow countrymen – a positive and peaceful vision, that is, of themselves.

There is, let's not mince words, a

German problem, compounded of geography, economic potency and nationalist sentiment... the death this week of Ernst Jünger was a reminder of the cauldron's depth. Post war there were ways in which divided Germany might have become a loose cannon. What, first, Konrad Adenauer did was to anchor his country in the West and use membership of the EC to re-present the country's possibilities to itself. Helmut Kohl's significance has been to update the game and run with the ball.

At the heart of that effort is the Franco-German alliance – something which British commentators and politicians alike find difficult to understand. Governments change in Paris but the liaison continues untroubled. British attempts at seduction, usually perfunctory, leave nary a mark. It is a sign of Kohl's success that were he to lose the federal elections this October to the Social Democrats both their potential candidates – Gerhard Schröder and Oskar Lafontaine – would follow the

well-trodden path to France without demur. There is no question that EMU is the logical continuation of the Franco-German project, which is why British membership is so fraught with difficulties. Yes, it is "political", and for that reason the 155 German economics professors who wrote recently predicting doom and gloom are barking up the wrong tree: the Chancellor, with the French political class, believes that political will can change economic destiny. We in Britain, graduates of the Thatcher school, find that hard to swallow; we are well advised to wait and see.

But there is no denying the historical force of Helmut Kohl's plan, the nobility of his ambitions for melding his proud countrymen into a permanent pact for peace in Europe. That is why mere good neighbourliness requires us to applaud the City Corporation's award to him. If the Chancellor were now to utilise his right as a Freeman to take a drink or three in Threadneedle Street, then *prosit!*

Post letters to Letters to the Editor  
and include a daytime telephone number.  
Fax 0171 293 2056; e-mail: letters@independent.co.uk  
E-mail correspondents are asked to give a postal address.  
Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

## LETTERS

### Gulf crisis

POLITICIANS have a natural reluctance to give clear, straight answers to important questions. It is not clear how we are to destroy Saddam's stocks of weapons of mass destruction and his ability to produce them.

Our very own experts on such weapons, the chaps at Porton Down who know how to produce them and what they can do, have advised the Government on the appalling damage Saddam's weapons can cause. I wonder whether they have also advised the Government of the effects of the bombing of Saddam's stockpiles of chemical and biological agents and the factories and laboratories in which they are produced, if that is contemplated?

Why have we been given no information about it? I suspect that the effect of this would be to turn our conventional bombs into the most frightening weapons of mass destruction imaginable, by distributing these agents far and wide among innocent Iraqis, our own forces and the populations of neighbouring countries. Before sensible people can make up their minds on what attitude to take, they surely need clear answers to such questions.

Professor PETER  
ALEXANDER  
Farnham, Surrey

THE following considerations seem to us of vital importance in the present Gulf crisis.

First, air strikes against Iraq are unlikely to achieve their objective, whether this be the elimination of chemical weapons production capacity, or the removal of Saddam Hussein from power.

Second, military action will be illegal without explicit authorisation from the UN Security Council. It has given no such authorisation to date, and is unlikely to do so. A Security Council decision requires an affirmative vote of nine members, including the concurring votes of all five permanent members.

Third, we cannot expect others to abide by international law if we do not do so ourselves. FRANK BARNABY, former Director, Stockholm International Peace Institute; FRANK BLACKBAY, former Director, Stockholm International Peace Institute; MORRIS BRODIE, Ex-Services CND; JAMES DICKENS, Dr DOUGLAS HOLDSTOCK, Secretary and Editor, *Medicine, Conflict and Survival*; MEDACT;



Professor G HUTCHINSON;  
Professor JAKE JACOBS;  
REBECCA JOHNSON,  
Director, The Acronym  
Institute; Air Commodore A C L  
MACKIE; MARGARET  
QUASS; MARC WELLER,  
Deputy Director, Centre for  
International Studies,  
University of Cambridge;  
and others  
London N7

THE last Gulf War provided adequate evidence that the only effect of military action against Iraq is to bolster Saddam Hussein's position by producing a "spirit of the blitz" which makes Iraqis feel forced to co-operate against the Western world, perceived as their oppressor.

Nor is it hard to understand why they feel this way when you consider the numbers of civilians killed by air bombardment in the last war, or the 1.2 million whom the UN estimates have died as a result of sanctions since the last war. Military action will simply bolster Saddam's attempt to portray himself as defender of Iraq.

If we truly wish to help those people to end Saddam's rule we should be providing funding and political support to the coalition of democratic opposition parties in Iraq. DUNCAN McFARLANE  
Braidwood, Lanarkshire

THE only method that will solve the Iraq problem at its root is communication. It is time now, in the teeth of the crisis, to be even bolder: to convene a meeting involving all the nations of the Middle East, including all those who have stocks of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons, and the US.

The aim of the meeting should be to address fear: Iraq's fear of Iran, Iran's fear of Iraq, Israel's fear of her Arab neighbours, America's fear of Islamic fundamentalism, the Kurds' fear of annihilation, and all the other massive fears which pervade the region. Until these are addressed, there will be no peace.

Dr SCILLA ELWORTHY  
Director  
Oxford Research Group

### Childcare tax breaks

CONGRATULATIONS on your campaign for a childcare allowance. In welcoming your campaign, Liberal Democrats may ask you to make two qualifications.

First, the object must be to help those single parents who choose to work, not to penalise those who make the equally legitimate choice to stay at home. It is not the purpose of the state to tell people how to live but to enable them to make their own choices effectively.

Second, we hope that you may give changes in the benefit system priority over tax breaks. Tax breaks, by definition, can only help those who are already working and those who suffer worst are those whom the cost of childcare prevents from working at all. In theory, Harriet Harman is tackling this problem, but her changes are bedged about with eligibility conditions so tight that Steve Webb MP, the Liberal Democrat Spokesperson for Social Security, has calculated that only 2,000 women in the

whole country are entitled to benefit from them.

What we need is to give Harriet Harman some money to put where her mouth is. She might find the Treasury would benefit as much as the single parent. Earl RUSSELL  
Liberal Spokesman for Social Security  
House of Lords  
London SW1

### Addicted to nicotine

HUGH THOMSON talks about smokers trying to shift the blame on to those who supplied what they wanted (letter, 18 February). But the tobacco industry cannot escape responsibility for its products and load it all on to smokers.

People who smoke want nicotine, but they get cigarettes. The great majority of smoking-related disease is caused by tar, not nicotine. The cigarette is an extraordinarily dirty delivery system for the drug nicotine.

Tobacco companies have a duty to their consumers to

supply a product fit for its purpose. That purpose is to satisfy nicotine addiction, not to cause smoking-related disease. Up to now, the tobacco industry has manifestly failed to reduce the hazards of cigarettes.

Because of the constraint on choice imposed by addiction, it is hard to argue that smoking is an activity freely undertaken, and that smokers thereby assume responsibility for the consequences. Leaving addiction aside, the manufacturer is still responsible for the product. When mineral water was found to be contaminated with trace amounts of benzene, far lower than those routinely delivered by cigarettes, it was withdrawn from sale until the problem was rectified.

MARTIN JARVIS  
Imperial Cancer Research  
Fund  
London WC2

### Empty rhetoric

THE phrase "You'll have had your tea" does not come from Muriel Spark's *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*, as Irvine Welsh claims ("Choose theatre, get ecstatic", 16 February). The phrase is an old and well-known piece of Edinburgh irony.

I heard an interesting variant of it from Professor Norman Stone. As a boy, Stone was taken to visit an aunt in Morristown, where he was given (in his words) "a slice of ham that you could see the plate through". After he had wolfed this down, the hostess took the plate away, saying "Would Norman have liked some more?" Stone described this kind of phrase as "the rhetorical negative".

DAVE DENNISON  
Edinburgh

### Mission of hope

I WONDER if anyone has ever thought of sending a posse of missionaries to Northern Ireland in the hope that they might bring Christianity to that troubled country?

GRAHAM DON  
London E3

### Religious freedom

RABBI Shmuley Boteach finds the proselytising activities of Nick Howard towards Jews offensive to the point of "spiritual Nazism" ("Howard's son tries to convert Oxford Jews", 15 February). I'm not quite sure what his objections are.

Does he want a fundamental change in religious freedoms in this country? Restraining adherents of any particular religion from debating or discussing their beliefs with members of another religion sounds like a particularly pernicious piece of censorship.

Perhaps Rabbi Boteach feels that Oxford undergraduates are incapable of making their own decisions when confronted with alternative views, and should be protected from indulging in independent thought. If this is so, what sort of education is Oxford offering?

Perhaps the simplest answer to all this is to assume that the Jewish students went along to Howard's meeting because they wanted to.

P HARRISON  
Birmingham

### Embarrassing humour

PAUL McCANN asks (17 February): "Fresh from taking the bad behaviour from *Men Behaving Badly*... whatever will the Americans do to Basil and Sybil?"

What they will not have to concern themselves with, as they run through the *Fawlty Towers* ideas, are references to breaking wind, wilkes and all the other material which now passes for humour because it makes audiences laugh, albeit more with embarrassment than amusement.

Am I one of only apparently half-a-dozen men in Britain who left the material currently being peddled by the BBC behind us when we left the fifth form?

T W LILLICRAP  
Plymouth

### Angelic challenge

HOW long will it be, I wonder, before an attempt is made to climb the *Angel of the North*? Will the wings end up being painted in the black and white stripes of Newcastle or the red and white of Sunderland? It seems an awfully inviting challenge.

ROBERT CROWTHER  
Widney,  
Oxfordshire

## From the miracle of the Princess of Wales there flows a true wonder



MILES  
KINGDON

"HAVE you seen those new Camilla stamps?" said the man at the bar the other night.

"Have you gone mad?" said the woman with orange hair. "Camilla stamps?"

"Do you mean the Diana stamps?" I said.

"No," said the man. "I mean the Camilla stamps."

"There are no Camilla stamps," said the orange lady. "Unless the Togo Republic has issued some."

"No, there aren't," said the man. "Not yet. But it is not impossible that there might be one day. If Diana stamps, why not Camilla stamps? That is the point I was making."

"It's Diana's last revenge," said the orange lady. "She's done it again. You've got to hand it to her."

"Done what?" I said. "Did I miss something? What has Diana done?"

"Edged Camilla off the front page," said the orange lady. "Diana has been dead for nearly a year, and she's still front page news. They can't get rid of her. And now she's back on British stamps, ten times the size of the Queen. They must have thought they'd got shot of her after the funeral, but she won't go away."

"Got shot of her?" said a man called Jim. "Are you one of those who maintain that there was a Royal Family conspiracy to have her assassinated?"

"Of course not," said the orange lady. "The Royal Family couldn't manage anything so complicated. The Royal Family can't get anything right. They can't even work the fire alarms at Windsor Castle. How on earth do you think they'd manage an assassination?"

"It would make a change, though," I said. "For a royal family to organise an assassination, I mean. Historically it's always

been the other way round. People have always assassinated royals. Nice for a royal to assassinate someone."

"Come off it," said the man called Jim. "Henry VIII spent most of his life assassinating people. Sometimes he married them first, sometimes he didn't."

"The one thing that always amazed me about the Diana business," said the orange lady, ignoring all this, "was the way everyone urged the Royal Family to do their grieving in public. Why did anyone ever assume that they were grieving at all? For years Diana had been driving them potty. They just wanted her out of the way. Then suddenly one day she was out of the way, and round celebrating. The reason they didn't grieve in public was that they were all partying in private."

"Allegedly," said the landlord, who gets nervous sometimes when the talk

starts to get dangerous.

"Thing that amazes me," said the man called Jim, "is why they haven't called for Diana to be made a saint. If they can make Rupert Murdoch a saint, surely they can do it to Diana?"

"Point one, they haven't made Mr Murdoch a saint, only a papal knight or Swiss Guard or something," said the orange lady. "Point two, Diana can't be a saint until a miracle has happened. And there haven't been any Diana miracles."

"Oh, yes, there have," I said. "Everyone turned and looked at me, almost as astounded as if I had offered to buy a round."

"It's to do with these Diana stamps," I said. "You know they came out on February 3rd?"

"Take your word for it," said the orange lady. "So first day covers were all stamped on February 3rd."

"That's normal."

"But such has been the demand for these Diana stamps that they have extended the season through the whole of February, and you can get Diana First Day Covers stamped from now till the end of the month. This has never been done for anyone else. But for Diana the first day has become a month long. Isn't that a miracle? To have a First Day last a whole month?"

"No," said the orange lady. "It's a load of baloney."

"So, what would you call a miracle?" I said.

"To have Camilla Parker Bowles featured on a stamp," said the man at the bar. "All right, all right," I said, fearful that the whole conversation would start all over again. "What would you all like to drink?"

"My God, he's buying us a round!" said the orange lady. "It's a miracle!"



RUPERT  
CORNWELL  
TAKING  
SIDES



The Anglo-American alliance plots war, unmindful of the absurdities. Military force ought to be only employed as a last defence of paramount interests – in this case the security of the West's oil, and the furtherance of an overall Middle East peace settlement. Now the oil argument which underlay the last Gulf War (Kuwait would today be languishing unnoticed as Iraq's nineteenth province had it produced dates) simply does not apply. Oil prices are standing at a four-year low – and that with only a fraction of Iraq's potential production reaching the market. Nor, unlike his annexation of Kuwait, can Saddam's present behaviour remotely be construed as a threat to the key world producer, Saudi Arabia.

Mr Robertson of course was warning Saddam Hussein to expect no favours from Kofi Annan. *Si vis pacem, para bellum*, and one can only hope this is part of a cool, unblinking endgame that carries the day by diplomatic means. But the odds are on a shooting war. And when it's over, it is hard to imagine Britain emerging with much credit in the EU it professes to lead. Europe's eternal suspicions about Britain will have been confirmed.



PAUL  
VALLELY  
ESTABLISHED  
VALUES

Powell, who was *inter alia* an amateur versifier in the mode of his hero A E Housman, would have enjoyed that. Indeed he would no doubt have allowed himself a wry little smile over the whole fuss that welled up over the propriety of whether so notorious a political figure as he should have been accorded the honour of lying, in state or otherwise, in such a shrine to British nationhood. It has been an archetypally Powellite row, con-

Small wonder, for the whole sad business exposed one of the profound faultlines in the Church of England, which centres around the question of what is the role of an estab-

Much has been written since his death about his "rivers of blood" speech on immigration and we have been routinely told that he did not actually use the phrase (which was in fact Churchill's). But he did speak about "watching a nation busily engaged in heaping up its own funeral pyre". He called for immigration to be reduced to "negligible proportions", and he demanded the "urgent" encouragement of repatriation. Without it the race problem in Britain by the end of the century would be "of American

The key argument for the antidisestablishmentarians is

The Church may pray that for Enoch Powell, the man, this will come to pass. But when it appears to seek to absolve Powell, the politician, from the judgement of history the possibility of disestablishment comes a step closer.



From Westminster Abbey (right) to St Margaret's: Enoch Powell's funeral processes through the heartland of the Church

## How the Church nearly lost its way over the death of Enoch Powell

## Adopt a tiger...



**...before it's too late**

Hundreds of tigers are still being illegally slaughtered by poachers throughout Asia. Every day worldwide two wild tigers die to satisfy an appalling trade in tiger bones and fur, often leaving behind helpless cubs to starve. We are offering you the chance to provide a secure future for an orphaned tiger.

**M**ax is a rare Indo-Chinese tiger who was orphaned as a small cub when poachers killed his mother. The illegal tiger-bone industry for Chinese medicines could push the tiger extinct by the year 2000.

Max would have perished without their mother's care but he was rescued in time and now lives in a natural habitat sanctuary in Thailand. He will always depend on human care - will you help us to help him and fund tiger conservation world-wide?

Foster Max and help provide the attention he needs, ensure other orphan cubs can be rescued and fund vital tiger protection projects. For just £14.95 (of which £10.00 is your donation), you'll receive a gift pack including:

■ A personalised certificate ■ A colour photograph of Max  
■ A history of Max's background ■ A tiger fact sheet  
■ An exclusive tiger T-shirt

Yes! I would like to foster Max for the person I have nominated below:

Foster mailing preferences Mr/Ms/Ms/Ms/Ms	Foster parent Mr/Ms/Ms/Ms/Ms	DND (02)
Address	Address	

Please send initial gift pack to: The lesser parent ☐ The parent making payment ☐  
I would like a: Small ☐ Medium ☐ Large ☐ X-Large ☐ T-shirt ☐  
I require a short-sleeved polo shirt ☐ or a long-sleeved polo shirt ☐ or a short-sleeved polo shirt ☐

I enclose a cheque/postal order (Payable to Care for the Wild) ☐ or debit my credit card ☐  
 Visa/Amex/Mastercard No. \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_  
 Amount £ \_\_\_\_\_ (If the person receiving this gift pack is abroad add £3.00 Europe £5.00 elsewhere)  
 For more information about Care for the Wild please tick here ☐  
 Care for the Wild, 2 Ashfields, Horsham Road, Rump, West Sussex, BN12 4UX. Tel 01293 871500

New York, New York, it's still a helluva town – just don't 'over-share'

JOHN  
WALSH

I SPENT LAST WEEK IN New York, interviewing several grizzled celebrities. I had Ed Koch, the former mayor of New York, explain to me how supporting the death penalty was now considered "a liberal position" in America. Elmore Leonard, supreme fetishist of the Magnum .45 and the Browning automatic, told me that if he had his way, these awful handguns would be banned in the States, as they are in the UK. And I made Joseph Heller cry by asking him about his relationship with his mother. What else, now that we have strayed into Name-Drop Land? Oh yeah. I stood beside Francis Ford Coppola at a party at the Tribeca Grill (owned by Robert de Niro) as the urbane patriarch of Zoetrope studios embraced various elderly actors. And I sat with my face precisely six inches from the end of Woody Allen's clarinet, as he swung into "Jambalaya", the Carpenters' swamp-foxtrox celebration of Cajun soup.

Allien has been playing with Eddie Davis's jazz band for years now, and his public appearances are regular enough to appear on tourist *itineraries*. He came to "sit in" with them at Michael's pub, where a crowd would come to gawp at the specky *auteur* every Monday evening. Lately, though, the band have shifted to (unannounced) gigs at the classy Carlyle Hotel on the Upper East Side. The audience was full of cool out-of-towners, desperate not to be thought of as star-watblers, but as *bona fide* trad-jazz fans. Beside me a chap in Karl Lagerfeld ponytail

and his Christy Turlington-esque trophy girlfriend were regretting they'd ordered supper, as the remains of their prawns-in-salsa sat congealing on their plates over the next hour.

For the rest of us, it was an hour of rapture. I'd assumed that that Mr. Allen played clarinet, but the way Bill Clinton plays saxophone. Not a hint of it. He performs like a devotee, like a zealot, like he practices hours a day. He swings through "Shake That Thing," he tootles in and out of "Baby Face," he gets all gathered and intense for "All That I Ask Is Love." The band is a mix of New York faces, from the Ivy League smoothies on slide trombone to the boyish matinee idol on slap bass. Veins stand out on the brow of the trumpet player as he wah-wahs away with a plastic bar over his instrument. They blend together like a complicated dance routine, while giving the impression of not knowing each other well. Eddie Davis, the banjo player, calls the tunes, in a tone of puzzlement. "I'll try it," says Woody, *sotto voce*. "I don't can't remember it." And off they go again, harmonizing immaculately. Between solos, Woody sits, looking suburban and crestfallen in his pink shirt, his apologetic cor-duroy and meek little socks, the clarinet balanced on his chairback like a bottle of wine. Is he enjoying himself? Does he mind us staring, and wondering about Soon-Yi? Why does he do it?

After an hour, most of the band disappears, leaving Woody playing duets with Eddie Davis. They play "Nobody Knows You When You're

Down and Out" and "After You're Gone". You look at the two men, the myopic Woody and the chuckling Eddie beside him - Eddie the hanjo man, fat as Buddha, hairy of arm, capacious of trouser, wholly delighted by the music - and you realise how much the film legend needs the jazzman. It occurs to you that, amazingly, this jolly roustabout, his head full of a million songs, is a person Woody has aspired to become for years.

UP AT THE METROPOLITAN Museum of Art, beside Central Park, one has a rare chance of seeing some spectacular Mughal carpets or inspecting the sketchbooks of Jackson Pollock (1937-1941) in their glory. Regrettably, *le tout* Manhattan is ignoring both worthy exhibitions and descending in a lowering herd to the Versace show in the basement. The display of the late Gianni's most outrageous frocks has entranced the city's aesthetes and fashion victims alike, and they will about, swooning in front of the glass cases, cooing at the Whasam! dress modelled on Roy Lichtenstein's pop-art explosion, the figure-bugging Italian Street-walker sheaths, the stunning plink, slashed and ruched evening gowns, and the wild shores of fantasy clothes—the Lycra "militards" and hellion pants, the Devil outfits and *à-pluqué* gowns and peasant-panto costumes full of ruffs and patchwork. Whew. The only thing wrong with this startling show is the accompanying text, the most pretentious crap ever appended to a few yards of silk and

jersey. It gushes about Versace's "graphic truculence", his "Promethean redefinition of fashion as sexual and media energy". And if you thought the great couturier liked long cut-away skirts in neo-classical togas because they were dead sexy, think again. "An enthusiast of history, Versace sought no replicas or simulacra," drones the text. "Rather he read history into the present and rendered the past as pertinent to his unending perception of the new". *Donnez-moi une fracture*, as we say on the Paris catwalk.

**INVASIONS OF YOUR EMOTIONAL** space are everywhere in Manhattan, like the smell of roasting pecan nuts. The chances of being nudged in midtown have dwindled to nothing, but you can still encounter, as I did, a young black girl emerging from a doorway, clutching your arm and saying, "I'm from Washington and I have AIDS. Can you help me with a meal?" Of course you give her money; but this is a classic case of what's now called "over-sharing," i.e. those moments when somebody tells you slightly too much about their intimate secrets (bankruptcy, messy divorce, chronic diarrhoea). What's remarkable for New York is that you're now allowed to say you'd rather not know.

On the subway, your emotions are stirred by advertisements which have a built-in pathos. Suffering wives too poor to shed a horrible spouse are advised how they can go about it without breaking the bank. "Finally, an affordable attorney", it promises. "Ring 1-

**800 DIVORCE**". Next seat along, a poster inquires, "Is life in your face?" and suggests, "Reach out for someone who really cares about you", though it's hard to see how the people manning the phones at Covenant House can have many personal feelings about the strangers who ring up. Lastly, "Do you know who the father is?" asks a sad little hoarding. The New York Immunogenetics Center is New York's only paternity testing lab. Ring 1-888 DAD-SEARCH".

THE CITY'S YELLOW TAXIS HAVE acquired a new hazard: the taped celebrity message. In an initiative brought in last year by Mayor Giuliani, all cabs now carry recordings by TV stars telling passengers to wear seat belts and so forth, and adding cute little messages at the end. When you sit inside, the voice of Joan Rivers tells you to buckle up, "and by the way darling you look gorgeous. That colour is just you", or the fruity *Melrose*tones of sexologist Dr Ruth Westheimer advise, "and get a receipt from zer driver. I'm glad've he'd this liddle chat." After the first 20 seconds or so, the cheery salutations from Jackie Mason or Plácido Domingo start to grate on you. But New Yorkers have recently discovered that every cab's licence plate carries a code number telling you which celebrity voice is playing inside. So if, like me, you really can't stand bearing Eartha Kitt saying "and have a purrtnut day, Grrrrrrrrrr... ever again, you can steer clear of all cabs bearing her mark.



# Professor Sir Harry Hinsley

IN 1943 Harry Hinsley was sent to Washington to negotiate the "Brutus" codebreaking agreement with the United States government, the agreement which committed both parties to exchange all intelligence information in their possession relating to the Axis powers. As well as preparing the emissary for the complexities and double dealing of the academic world in which he was to spend the rest of his life, the entrusting of such a mission to a 24-year-old undergraduate serves as a striking reminder of the opportunities that the Second World War provided for highly intelligent individuals from very humble backgrounds.

The son of an employee of the coal department at the Wall-sall Co-op and a school caretaker, Hinsley had come up to St John's College, Cambridge, as an Entrance Exhibitioner in 1937, and two years later was awarded a First in Part I of the Historical Tripos. Then, with Part II in view and no doubt another First on the cards, one day in the winter of 1939-40 he was asked to call on Martin Charlesworth, the Fellow of St John's to whom, together with F. E. Adcock at King's, the Cambridge end of the recruitment process for the Government Code and Cipher School had been entrusted. So Hinsley went to Bletchley, and for the time being History went to pot.

The experience of those heady days Hinsley later recorded in *Codebreakers: the inside story of Bletchley Park*, the volume he edited with Alan Stripp in 1993, whilst the achievements of "BP", since they were

chronicled by him as editor-in-chief of the monumental *British Intelligence in the Second World War* (1979-90), and the contribution to the Allies' military operations provided by the breaking of the Enigma cipher, are now common knowledge.

Hinsley's particular activity at Bletchley was the study of German naval wireless traffic. This brought him into contact with Admiralty Intelligence, a liaison so intimate that a signal from Home Fleet querying some item "What is your source?" received the one-word reply "Hinsley". Years later Hinsley's "How I Sank the Bismarck" (which was the undergraduate's title for it, not his, or not entirely his) was a regular show-stopper at Cambridge college history societies.

In 1946 he married Hilary Brent-Smith, whom he had met at Bletchley and in whose serene company he returned to Cambridge to St John's where he had been elected to the Fellowship two years before.

The first time I met him, when I presented myself as a scholarship candidate in 1960, he seemed very old. I clearly remember wrongly spotting a resemblance to Franz Liszt in *extremis*. Indeed so old did he seem that on not seeing him about the place in 1961 I drew that wrong conclusion often drawn by those ignorant of the existence of academic leave. In fact, Harry Hinsley was very much alive in 1961, as in 1962 those of my contemporaries who were his pupils very soon discovered.

He was a wonderful teacher. Associating himself with an earlier age, he took the view that

any intelligent historian could teach anyone, even a Johnian, any intelligible period of history. This conviction may have derived from his own experience at Bletchley. But what with Caius on the up, as it was then, in 1962 such studied amateurishness struck even us as high-wire. Even so, with Hinsley it worked. "If you want to do modern this term, you'll go to Mr Miller, because he's a medievalist," he informed us. "But if you want to do medieval, then you'll come to me, because I'm a modernist." And we all assented to this and nodded gravely. And we weren't all fools, or just rugby players (which Hinsley himself had been, which was extraordinary, though, given that, the rest was altogether credible. He had especially enjoyed playing in the rain).

So I was supervised by him on "The Coronation of Charlemagne", which was only one of his set-pieces, and in accordance with some Hinsleyan variation of the immutable Hinsleyan precepts also went to him for modern things and benefited from his deconstruction of his own *Power and the Pursuit of Peace* (1963).

As a lecturer, he was spell-binding then, and 30 years on was spell-binding still. Less than a year ago I listened to him as he kept an enormous post-prandial Cambridge audience on the edges of its collective seat while he reminisced on Bletchley days, without a note and for exactly the hour prescribed. Many of the audience on this occasion were candidates for the MPhil degree in International Relations, the degree course which Hinsley invented in the



Hinsley in 1979 with the first volume of his monumental *British Intelligence in the Second World War*. Photograph: Hulton Getty

aftermath of *Power and the Pursuit of Peace*, and which has brought no end of interesting students to Cambridge in recent years, as well as spawning so many more more questionable courses in its wake.

Small of stature and dapper in appearance, Hinsley was notable for the distinctiveness of his pronunciation, the idiosyncrasy of which was more often

feebly mimicked than artfully reproduced. "That was a caricature, wasn't it?" he asked after one more than usually accurate representation.

His contribution to St John's College, to which he was permanently attached for the last 52 years of his life, is incalculable. As Fellow, Tutor, President and Master, he was forever about the place. It was during

his Mastership that at long last the college decided to "go mixed". Hinsley was not by nature a mixer, but once the change had been made he proved wholly supportive of it.

Because he was Reader in the History of International Relations, when in 1967 he said that there would be no war in the Middle East people took notice. And when, later that

year, he said at lunch that Wilson wouldn't dare devalue and as he said it the Fellowship rose as one from its anxious eggs on toast and made its way down to Lloyds to see what could be salvaged. Hinsley's view was that the Fellowship was rushing it.

Shortly after being elected Master of St John's, in 1981 he was catapulted into the Vice-Chancellorship of the universi-

ty. By 1981 Cambridge's palate of occupations and sittings was happily over. He wouldn't have been comfortable with these. The fashion now was for economy. Economy was a regime not altogether congenial to Hinsley. ("Just half a scuttle," he indicated from the chair at a meeting of his college council at about this time, as the fire was about to go out in the course of a discussion on the subject of how the college might cut corners.) In the history of the university he will be especially remembered for his promotion of the cause of early retirement.

Harry Hinsley was a man for all seasons, applauded and honoured both at home and abroad. Winter or summer, he would emerge in three-piece suit, plastic mac and invariably black beret. In mid-August, with the temperature in the nineties, the plastic mac and beret cut a particular swathe through the queues in the Cambridge Sainsbury's. He was a rare man.

Peter Linehan

Francis Harry Hinsley, historian, 1918, Warr service, HM Foreign Office, 1939-46; Fellow, St John's College Cambridge, 1944-79, 1989-98, Tutor 1956-63, President 1975-79, Master 1979-81; OBE 1946; Lecturer in History, Cambridge University 1949-65; Reader in the History of International Relations 1965-69, Professor of the History of International Relations 1969-83, Vice-Chancellor 1981-83; Editor, *Historical Journal* 1960-71; FBA 1981; Kt 1985; married 1946 Hilary Brent-Smith (two sons, one daughter); died Cambridge 16 February 1998.

## Lord Granville of Eye

LORD GRANVILLE of Eye was the oldest member of the House of Lords and one of the last surviving members of the 1929 parliamentary intake. Although the reference books had recorded his birthday as 12 February 1899 it became clear recently that he was in fact born the previous year, and he died two days after celebrating his 100th birthday.

Edgar Granville was born in Reading. He was subsequently educated in High Wycombe and Melbourne, Australia; he joined the Australian Light Horse at the outbreak of the First World War, serving in Gallipoli where he was wounded, and then in Egypt and France. After the war he set up his own manufacturing business before acquiring directorships in the pharmaceutical and armaments industries.

In 1929, he fought and won the rural constituency of Eye in Suffolk for the Liberals. Before the war Eye had been a safe Liberal seat. This was partly because of the strength of non-conformist feeling in the constituency but also due to the relative weakness of the Conservative landed interest. However Eye had last returned a Liberal in 1922 and at the time of the party's decline Granville's victory was an achievement.

He was to remain associated with the seat for the next 30 years (and MP for 22), fighting his last election there as a Labour candidate in 1959.

Granville's hold on the area was based on assiduous personal contact. He employed two secretaries whose jobs included writing to all those who married in the constituency to offer them their MP's best wishes. The local Liberal organisation was very weak and Granville relied heavily on his network of friends to fight elections.

As an MP he had a relatively undistinguished career. He was Honorary Secretary of the Liberal Agricultural Group from 1929 to 1931. Subsequently he became the Parliamentary Private Secretary to Sir Herbert Samuel, then Home Secretary, in 1931 and afterwards to Sir John Simon, the Foreign Secretary, from 1931 to 1936. However he never achieved ministerial office.

Of more interest was his shifting allegiance from the 1930s to the 1950s. Originally elected on the coat tails of Lloyd George's slogan "We can conquer unemployment", he sided with Sir John Simon when the Liberal Party split over free trade in 1931 and stayed a supporter of Ramsay MacDonald's National Government

when the Liberal cabinet ministers resigned the following year. This may have been because of constituency pressure. As a cereal farming area, Eye was strongly in favour of the agricultural subsidies and tariffs that the Government were beginning to introduce.

Granville remained a supporter of the Liberal Nationals as Sir John Simon's supporters were known until the Second World War. After briefly serving with the Royal Artillery he resigned his commission in August 1940. By February 1942, along with several other Liberal National MPs, he was disillusioned both with their party and with the conduct of the war. Four of them including Granville resigned the whip to sit as Independents. With an election approaching, Granville rejoined the official Liberal Party in April 1945 and was narrowly re-elected in the 1945 election.

During the 1945-51 Attlee government Granville, Emrys Roberts and Megan Lloyd George became increasingly at odds with the Liberal leadership as Clement Davies, the party's leader, steadily moved the party towards a more anti-socialist position. After the 1950 election, when Labour's majority was reduced to six, he often voted in the government



Granville: sunny disposition. Photograph: Hulton Getty

lobbies to avoid a government defeat by the Conservatives. On one occasion, Granville, Roberts and Lloyd George even voted against a Liberal Party amendment on the cost of living to which all three had ac-

tually put their names. Asked to justify his action afterwards, Granville argued that the Liberal motion was simply being used as a cat's paw by the Conservatives to bring down the Labour government.

In the 1951 election, the nadir of Liberal fortunes, Granville was defeated in a three-cornered contest (of the six successful Liberal candidates only one was elected in a three-way fight). Without a seat in the Commons he quickly moved to join Labour in January 1952, much to the chagrin of Megan Lloyd George, who was not consulted before his defection. He subsequently fought Eye for Labour in 1955 and 1959 without success although the collapse of the Liberal vote in 1955 showed the extent to which it had been a personal vote for him.

In 1967 he was raised to the Lords by Harold Wilson, and initially sat as a Labour peer before becoming a cross-bencher during the 1970s. Although his recreations were listed as football, cricket and skiing, Granville was also the author of two political thrillers, *Storm English* (1972) and *The Domino Plan* (1975).

Malcolm Baines

There is a civilised custom whereby peers who have once been members of the House of Commons can wander into the members' cafeteria at will, writes Tam Dalyell. Almost daily, the first to be served was usually a squat man whom no

MP could remember as a parliamentary colleague. This was hardly surprising, since Edgar Granville had lost his seat in 1951. Our friendship began in 1968 when Harold Wilson, who remembered Granville as a loyal colleague supporting the Attlee government, sent him to the Lords. Granville sat down next to me and the first words he spoke were: "I stayed with your mum and dad in Bahrain in 1934 when I was Sir John Simon's parliamentary private secretary. Your dad was a stickler for imperial protocol, but your Arabic-speaking mum, with her cine-camera and friendships with Bahraini women fascinated us." Granville was a man with a sense of curiosity which led to shrewd and accurate judgements.

What really brought us together was Gallipoli, where my maternal grandfather had been severely wounded and many killed in his regiment, the King's Own Scottish Borderers. Granville described the circumstances of Anzac Cove, and the ludicrous night charge in which so many Australians, New Zealanders and British perished. His one source of pride was his presidency of the Gallipoli Association. He was

almost a professor of Gallipoli studies and took a deep interest in any Gallipoli veterans who approached him.

I think Granville may have been the originator of the phrase "Death by friendly fire", certainly he used it before anyone else I know. He compiled instances of death at the hands of our own troops through confusion at Gallipoli.

A natural horseman, he was a scout with the Australian Light Horse. The Turks, as he put it, were a secondary consideration: the first task he had to undertake was to find fresh water sources. One evening, dismounted by a pool, he was hit in the leg by a sniper. A) - aging to scramble on to his horse, which was also slightly wounded, he escaped, only to succumb to dysentery and yellow fever. "After Gallipoli anything was a bonus. I lived on borrowed time" - which accounted for his sunny and equable disposition.

Edgar Louis Granville, politician born Reading, Berkshire 12 February 1898; MP (Liberal) for Eye 1929-51; Parliamentary Private Secretary to Sir Herbert Samuel 1931, to Sir John Simon 1931-36; created 1967 Baron Granville of Eye; married 1943 E) - abeth Hunter (one daughter); died London 14 February 1998.

## BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS

### DEATHS

BAYLY, Grace, widow of the Reverend Albert F. Bayly BA, on 14 February. Service at Christ Church, Uffington, Chesham, on Monday 23 February at 12.15. No flowers but donations if desired to Fairleigh Hospice c/o T. Pennack & Sons, 1 Watdon Road, Great Baddow, Chesham.

HINSLEY, Professor Sir Harry, OBE MA FBA, Fellow of St John's College, Cambridge, former Master of St John's College and Vice-Chancellor of the University of Cambridge, Emeritus Professor of the History of International Relations, died on Monday 16 February 1998, aged 79 years. SONS: Edwin, suddenly at home on 16 February 1998. Much-loved husband of Mary, a dear father and grandfather who will be deeply missed by his family and many friends. Funeral service at Chesham Cathedral on Friday 27 February at 2.45pm. Family flowers only, but donations to the Children's Hospice for the Eastern Region c/o T. Pennack & Sons, Great Baddow, Chesham CM2 2DW.

STUNGO, Adrian, husband of Ruth and father of Humphrey, Naomi and Ben, died at home on 16 February. His funeral will be held at Golders Green Crematorium on 21 February at 12 noon. Please call Levertons on 0171-586 4221 regarding donations.

Announcements for Births, MARRIAGES & DEATHS (Births, Marriages, Deaths, Memorial services, Wedding anniversaries, In Memoriam) should be sent in writing to the Gazette Editor, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL, telephoned to 071-293 2812 (24-hour answering machine 071-293 2811) or faxed to 071-293 2818. Charges are £6.50 a line (VAT extra).

### BIRTHS

The Duke of York, 38; Maj-Gen Peter Baldwin, consultant, Thomson Foundation, 71; Sir John Collyear, former chairman, USM, Texon, 71; The Rev Gwynne Henton Davies, Principal Emeritus, Regent's Park College, Oxford, 92; Sir Nicholas Penn, former High Commissioner in India, 62; Lord Forbes, premier Lord of Scotland, 80; Mr John Freeman, international relations consultant and former diplomat, 83; Lord Henniker, former ambassador, 82; Mr Andrew Jameson, swimmer, 33; Dr Robin Jeffrey, chairman and chief executive, Scottish Nuclear, 59; Miss Hana Mandlikova, tennis champion, 36; Professor Bernard Meadows, sculptor, 83; Dr Alan J. Munro, Master, Christ's College, Cambridge, 59; Sir John N. Nicholson, former chairman, Ocean Steam Ship Co, 87; Sir Daniel Pettit, former chairman, National Freight Corporation, 83; Mrs Erin Fitzoy, founder of battered wives' homes, 59; Mr Peter Price, former MBE, 56; Mr Smokey Robinson, singer, 58; Mr Colin Sharmar, senior partner, KPMG, 35; Miss Gwera Taylor, actress, 29; Mr Brian Tealer, former deputy chairman, LWT (Huddings), 69; Dr Jenny Tonge MP, 57.

### Anniversaries

Births: Nicolaus Copernicus (Mikolaj Kopernik), astronomer, 1473; David Garrick, actor, 1717; Adeline

Patti, soprano, 1843; Marie Oberon (Estelle Marie O'Brien Thompson), actress, 1911; Stan Kenton (Stanley Newcomb), jazz band-leader, 1912. Deaths: Charles Blondin (Jean-François Gravelin), tight-rope walker, 1897; André-Paul Guillaume Gide, novelist, 1951; John Grierson, documentary film maker, 1972. On this day: bread riots took place in Liverpool, 1835; the photograph was patented by Thomas Alva Edison, 1878; British and French ships shelled the Dardanelles, 1915. Today is the Feast Day of St Barabas, St Beatus of Lieburne, St Boniface of Liessum, St Conrad of Piacenza and St Mesrop.

### Lectures

British Museums: Linda Leach, "Mughal Portraiture", 1.15pm. RIBA (66 Portland Place, London W1): Terry Farrell, "National Aquarium and Other New Projects", 6.30pm. Grantham College (Barnard's Inn Hall, London EC1): Professor Lynette Hunter, "Telling Stories/Telling Lies", 5.30pm.

### Corporation of London

The Lord Mayor of London, Mr Richard Nichols, presented the Honorary Freedom of the City of London to Dr Helmut Kohl, the Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany, on the occasion of his visit to the City of London yesterday.

Changing of the Guard The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment escorts the Queen's Life Guard, Horse Grenade, 1pm.

## LAW REPORT: 19 FEBRUARY 1998

# No compensation for injury caused in Bosnia

Regina v Ministry of Defence, ex parte Walker; Queen's Bench Division, Crown Office List (Latham J) 9 February 1998

The policy of the Ministry of Defence, to exclude injuries suffered as a result of military activity in Bosnia from its scheme to compensate members of the armed forces serving overseas who were victims of crimes of violence, was not unfair or irrational.

The court dismissed the application of the applicant, a serving soldier, for judicial review of the decision of the Ministry of Defence not to grant him compensation under its Criminal Injuries Compensation (Overseas) Scheme for serious injuries sustained whilst he was serving with the United Nations peace supporting force in Bosnia.

The applicant had been stationed at a school which served both as an accommodation unit and an observation post. In May 1995, those premises were hit by a single round

from what was believed to be a Serbian tank. A number of soldiers were hurt, the most seriously injured being the applicant, whose right leg had to be amputated.

The applicant had remained in the army, on stormman duties, but he was likely to be invalided out before the end of his career. If he were entitled to compensation under the scheme, he would obtain a very substantial lump sum both for general damages for pain and suffering and loss of amenity, and for lost earning capacity.

David Pannick QC and Michael Fordham (Leigh, Day and Co) for the applicant; Philip Sales (Treasury Solicitor) for the respondent.

Mr Justice Latham said that the scheme had first been introduced in 1980 in order to give members of the armed forces serving overseas, as nearly as possible, compensation equivalent to that for which they would have been eligible if they had been the vic-

tim of a crime of violence in Great Britain.

In a letter distributed, to, *inter alios*, Commanders in Chief, Commanders and General Officers commanding all Commands and Districts at home and abroad, the respondent had stated that the scheme would not apply where the act of violence resulting in injury or death was committed by an enemy where a state of war existed or a warlike situation was declared to exist.

In December 1994 the Minister of State for the Armed Forces had stated in Parliament that current operations in Bosnia fell into the category of "war operations or military activity by warring factions". In October 1996 the applicant was informed that his application for compensation had been rejected.

It was submitted for the applicant that the policy which had been applied to him represented a change from that originally promulgated in 1980, and that, apart from the state-

ment by the minister in Parliament it had never been made public. To apply the new criteria amounted to unfairness justifying the intervention of the court.

There had clearly been a change of policy after 1980 about which members of the armed forces had not been told, but the evidence went nowhere near establishing that the applicant or any of his fellow soldiers were aware of what that policy had been, other than in a relatively anecdotal form. The most that the applicant could say was that in some way the fact that compensation was payable to soldiers killed or injured in Northern Ireland entitled him to conclude that it would equally be payable for injury or death sustained in Bosnia.

Although there was a superficial similarity between the two situations, in that the soldier's task could be said to be that of keeping the peace, conditions in the two countries were wholly different. In Nor-

thern Ireland the soldier's task was to deal with terrorism in what was otherwise a country where law and order was maintained. In Bosnia the soldier was required to carry out his task in a country where law and order had broken down, and where sections of the population had been at war with each other in a sense wholly different from the sectarian violence in Northern Ireland.

The applicant was undoubtedly entitled to fair treatment in accordance with the policy for the time being in force, but to no more than that. The respondent had been entitled to conclude that albeit the applicant's injury had been sustained as a result of a crime of violence, the tank had been engaged in "military activity" and thus came within the exception set out in the policy. The policy itself, which was not defined with reference to Bosnia alone, could not be said to be irrational or perverse.

Kate O'Hanlon, Barrister



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FINANCIAL JOURNAL OF THE YEAR

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## Government considers pulling plug on ICL benefit claim system

By Peter Thal Larsen

A £1.5bn project to replace Benefits Agency order books and Giro cheques with plastic payment cards and to computerise all Post Offices appeared close to collapse last night.

Following a series of delays and technical hitches, the Government is thought to be increasingly concerned about the likelihood of ICL, the computer services company, completing the contract.

PA, the consulting firm, has been asked to look at the options for the project, while the Departments of Social Security and Trade and Industry are holding a series of high-level discussions about the best way to proceed with it.

One option under consideration is understood to be the termination of the contract with ICL Pathway, the ICL subsidiary which is running the project. According to industry sources, rival computer services

companies have been approached about taking it over.

A DSS spokesman said: "We meet DTI ministers on a regular basis and this is one of the issues under discussion. We are discussing the problems at the moment." But an ICL Pathway official denied there were problems: "This contract is running according to an agreed plan. There is no consideration of the government pulling out." The Post Office said it remained committed to the project.

The project, which is the largest information technology (IT) contract ever awarded under the private finance initiative (PFI), was awarded to ICL in 1996 amid fierce competition. It envisaged issuing 20 million benefit claimants around the country with plastic "smart cards" with which they could claim pensions, income support, child benefit and disability benefit.

Payments would be made through 19,000 post offices around the country, which would be linked

up to a central computer system. The system was intended to reduce social security fraud by £150m a year.

The system was originally supposed to be up and running by the middle of 1998. However, it has been beset by delays. At the moment it has been installed in just 305 post offices, and only issues child benefit.

ICL Pathway insisted that the project was on schedule to be ready by a revised target of the middle of the year 2000. But industry experts say

the system faces a number of serious technical hurdles.

Problems are thought to centre on the complexity of certain social security payments, such as income support, and the need to link the Post Office computer system to the Benefits Agency's system. It is thought that the software being used by ICL may be ill-equipped to deal with a project of this size. In addition, staff are believed to be leaving the project as they fear they are unlikely to receive bonuses relat-

ed to work being completed on time.

The delays are a serious financial burden for ICL, because its payment is determined by the number of transactions that go through the system. Industry sources said the company had already spent £30m on the project and was currently losing a further £2m every month. But an ICL spokeswoman denied that the costs were one of the reasons why the company has delayed its flotation until the year 2000.

## Pound soars on record January shopping spree

By Diane Coyle  
Economics Editor

BRITAIN'S high streets boomed last month as bargain-hunting shoppers sent the growth in sales to its highest level for nearly 10 years. The strength of the surge came as a surprise despite earlier figures showing record price discounts in the January sales.

The combination of booming volumes and low prices meant none of the City's interest rate hawks or doves shifted from their respective perches yesterday. But the fact the recent Bank of England Inflation Report had warned of the likely need for higher interest rates sent the pound close to the DM3 level for the first time since the summer.

"These figures were much too strong. They should be enough to persuade the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) to move next month," said David Walton, an economist at Goldman Sachs.

Ken Wattret at Paribas agreed that a rate rise might come as early as March. "This was the fastest growth since those days of red braces and Filofaxes in the summer of 1988."

But other analysts said the soaring volume of goods sold had no implications for policy because consumers had needed the encouragement of price cuts.

Simon Briscoe at Nikko Europe said: "Strong sales are the result of low prices, not the precursor to higher inflation." He predicted sales volumes would fall back this month as retailers raised prices.

Rob Hayward, of Bank of America, added: "We pretty

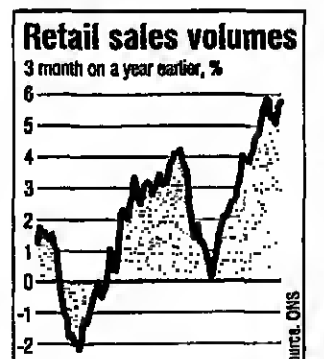
much knew this was going to be a strong number and it's come out a little higher than had been anticipated. But the big picture remains that we are looking for some sort of slowdown in the future. You have to look at what is going to happen to consumer spending in the future."

Today will bring an opportunity for members of the MPC, whose vote was split narrowly in favour of leaving rates unchanged in January and February, to give their latest views. Four - two in each camp - will give evidence to MPs on the Treasury Select Committee.

The volume of retail sales jumped by 1.8 per cent in January, and a small fall during December was revised away.

The annual growth rate climbed from 5.5 per cent to 6.9 per cent last month. In the latest three months - a better indicator of the trend - the year-on-year growth rate increased to 5.7 per cent.

The value of sales reached nearly £13bn during the month, and was 6.5 per cent higher during the latest three months than a year earlier.



One of the strongest components in January was the volume of food sold. It jumped by 2.1 per cent, an unusually strong rise, especially coming after Christmas.

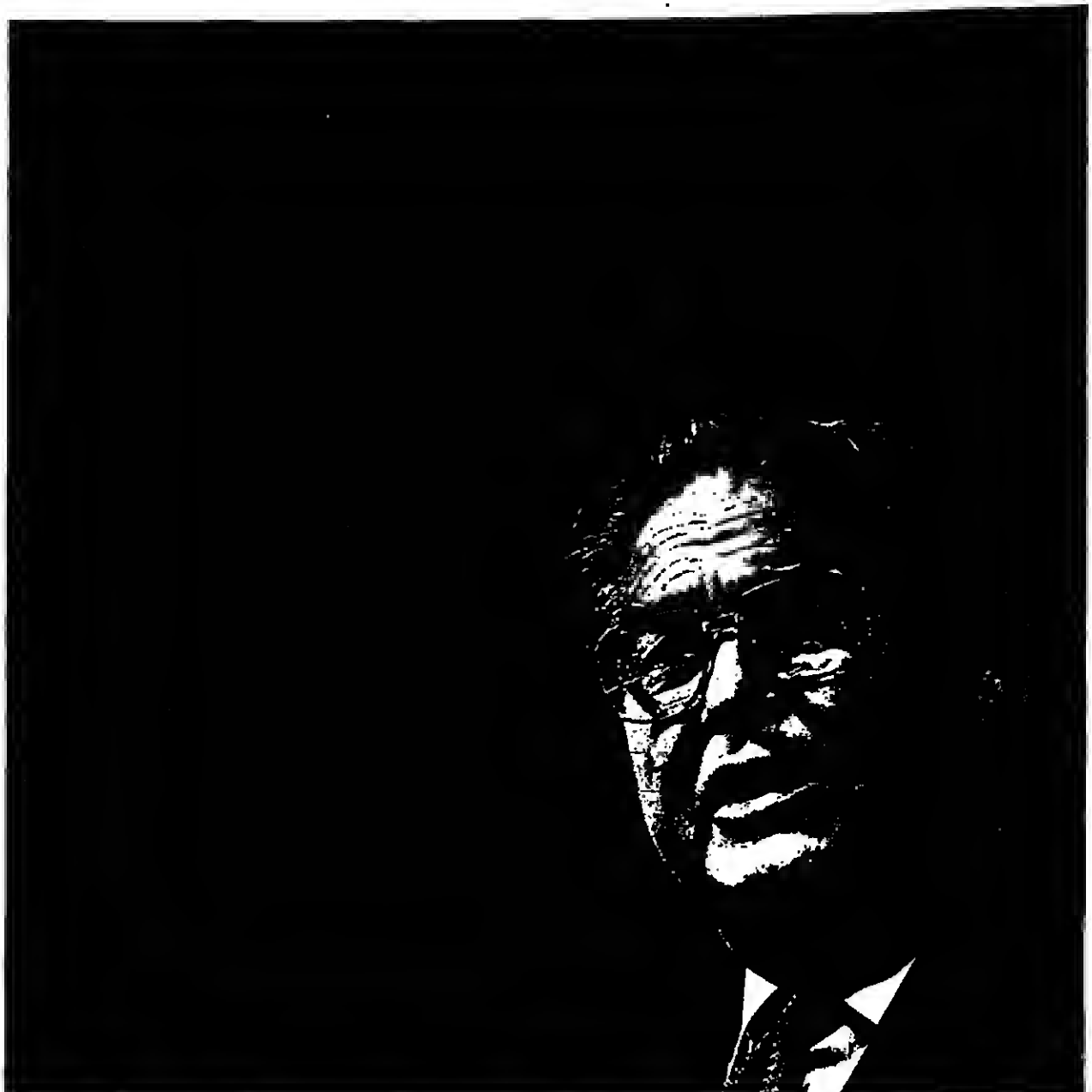
Sales volumes at department stores were also unusually buoyant, up 3.2 per cent in January. Clothing and household goods - the two areas where there were particularly pronounced price discounts - rose somewhat less. They were up 1.3 per cent and 0.8 per cent respectively, although the annual growth rate for household goods remained the strongest of all at 12 per cent.

While the recent volatility of the official retail sales figures - which account for about a third of consumer spending - since September left City pundits cautious about putting too much emphasis on the implications of the latest news. However, the financial markets took it as a clear sign that the odds on higher borrowing costs had increased.

The pound climbed two pence to nearly DM3 in reaction before falling back to just under DM2.99. The gilt market fell sharply and the futures market retreated from its earlier confidence that interest rates had already peaked.

The mood was not helped by a weak US Treasury bond market, where traders were reported to be profit-taking after the release of figures showing a much bigger than expected fall in prices at the factory gate in January. US producer prices dropped by 0.7 per cent during the month, the steepest drop since August 1993.

## Another five years for Steady Eddie at the Bank



EDDIE GEORGE was yesterday re-appointed by the Prime Minister to a second five-year term as Governor of the Bank of England, ending an increasingly embarrassing delay in announcing the Government's decision. The City welcomed the news that 'Steady Eddie', a Bank of England man since 1962, will be at the helm for a full term rather than the two years some had expected. The announcement showed that early tensions between Mr George and

Gordon Brown were in the end no obstacle to the Governor's re-appointment. Mr George, speaking in front of a giant video projection at the Euromoney International Bond Congress in central London yesterday, restated his belief that the euro will be introduced on time in 1999 and that it will be launched on a 'broad basis'. At the same time, six new non-executive directors were appointed to the Bank, intended to introduce broader regional and business experience to its

Court. They are: Roy Ballie, chairman of W&G Baird Holdings; Graham Hawker, chief executive of Hyder; Sheila McKechnie, director of the Consumers' Association; Bill Morris, general secretary of the Transport & General Workers' Union; Jim Stretton, chief executive of Standard Life in the UK; and Howard Davies, chairman of the FSA and a former deputy director of the Bank.

Outlook, page 25  
Photograph: Peter Macdarmid

## G8 code calls for open statistics

By Diane Coyle

FINANCE ministers and central bank governors of the world's leading economies, meeting in London this weekend, will give their initial approval to a draft code for greater openness in financial statistics in the wake of the Asian crisis.

Gordon Brown, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, said yesterday that one of the lessons of the recent turmoil was the need for greater transparency. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has been drawing up the code proposed by the UK at its annual meeting in September.

Mr Brown added that the G8 meeting (the G7 big industrial countries plus Russia) would also be considering new assessments about the impact of events in Asia on the world economy. The latest estimates by the IMF suggested it would trim 0.8 per cent off world growth this year and 0.4 per cent from growth in the advanced economies.

Asia is expected to dominate the agenda on Saturday, with discussions of the IMF's plans to press ahead with further liberalisation of capital flows despite the recent crisis. The need for reform and improved regulation of banking in emerging markets will also be discussed.

Other members are also expected to express their concern about the weakness of the yen and the scale of the planned boost to the Japanese economy.

The G8 meeting is to be followed on Sunday by a jobs summit for North American and European finance and economics ministers. Mr Brown said: "The purpose is to find new ways of responding to the need for job creation and job opportunities."

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## Christie's talks collapse as private investors fail to hammer out a deal

By Nigel Cole  
City Correspondent

Christie's, the auction house, yesterday ended talks with a consortium led by SBC Warburg Dillon Read regarding a possible recommended offer for the company.

The talks broke down on price with the investment banking group offering only around 270p-280p per share, valuing the company at just £460m-470m. This was much lower than previous estimates of the bid which put the offer at around £500m, or 300p per share.

The consortium's offer was little higher than yesterday's closing price of 265p, up 5p on the day. But Christie's shares

had no chance to react to the statement as it was issued after the market had closed yesterday afternoon.

"We've had some talks and the mood was constructive but the two parties have not been able to agree a proposal which the Christie's board would have been able to recommend to shareholders," said finance director Peter Blythe. "We have been a public company for 25 years and life goes on. It is business as usual."

The Warburg consortium featured a group of six high net worth individuals which included Joe Lewis, the Bahamas-based investor who already owns 29.9 per cent of the auction house. Mr Lewis,

who last year bought a stake in Glasgow Rangers football club, has been keen to increase his holding but under stock exchange rules could only do so if he made a bid for the whole group.

It is thought that the breakdown of yesterday's talks marks the end of the consortium's interest and that it will not return with revised terms. "We have always said that we would only proceed on a recommended basis and as that has not been possible we have withdrawn," a Warburg spokesman said.

SBC Warburg's softly-softly approach has caused some puzzlement in the City as its approach to Christie's was led

by Brian Keelan, the swash-buckling, corporate financier who successfully defended the Co-op last year from the £1bn bid from Andrew Regan.

Mr Keelan is best known not for agreed bids but for high profile hostile ones such as Trafalgar House's tilt at Northern Electric. He has also developed a reputation as an innovative financier who is keen to explore new ways of structuring deals.

Part of the attraction of Christie's to potential bidders has been its mailing list which includes many of the world's wealthiest individuals. Christie's would also have been able to use SBC's financial muscle to underwrite



Joe Lewis: His consortium aimed to buy auctioneers

auctions of valuable art collections.

Christie's sales last year overtook those at Sotheby's for the first time in 44 years. It will report its full-year results today with analysts expecting profits of £40m.

## Defection of top UBS analyst bags Tesco account for US bank

By Nigel Cole

THE FALLOUT from the banking merger between UBS and SBC continued yesterday when Morgan Stanley snatched up UBS's highly rated food retail analyst team and was appointed joint broker to Tesco.

The announcement follows the statement earlier this month that Tesco was ending its relationship with UBS following its merger with SBC. The supermarket group had expressed concerns about the merger because SBC Warburg acts as broker to its arch rival, J Sainsbury.

A key factor in Morgan Stanley winning the brokership was its recruitment of Andrew Fowler, UBS's food retail analyst,

who has a long relationship with Tesco. He left UBS on Tuesday.

Morgan Stanley will share the brokership with NatWest Securities, whose food retail team was strengthened last month by the recruitment of David McCarthy, who joined from BZW after the Crédit Suisse takeover.

A senior Tesco source said one reason behind its choice of Morgan Stanley was that the American investment banks - such as Merrill Lynch, Goldman Sachs and Salomon Smith Barney - appeared to be gaining share and influence in the UK. "You don't know who is still going to be around in five years time and it is better to have some insurance against these changes."

He said this was one reason behind Tesco having two brokers - one traditional UK house (NatWest) and a US firm such as Morgan Stanley. He added that there had been a significant increase in the number of FTSE 100 companies that now have joint brokers, up from 40 per cent to around 60 per cent.

In the supermarket sector alone Asda has Cazenove and HSBC James Capel while Sainsbury has SBC Warburg and ABN Amro Hoare Govett.

Other changes in the equities team at SBC Warburg Dillon Read include the decision to keep the entire UBS retail team led by Andy Hughes. SBC's retail analysts Paul Morris and Rod Whitehead are also being retained.

## STOCK MARKETS

Indices	Close	Change	Change (%)	52 wk high	52 wk low	Yield (%)
FTSE 100	5723.40	13.90	0.24	5709.50	4189.10	3.10
FTSE 250	4015.00	-7.20	0.14	5008.00	4384.20	3.08
FTSE 350	2721.20	6.10	0.23	2715.10	2075.70	3.10
FTSE All Share	2648.77	5.82	0.22	2642.95	2056.07	3.08
FTSE Smallcap	2432.70	3.20	0.13	2428.50	1225.20	3.29
FTSE Mediumcap	1327.70	2.30	0.17	1348.50	985.90	0.98
FTSE AIM	1002.50	0.60	0.04	8448.32	6358.78	1.66
Dow Jones	8425.15	28.64	-1.05	20910.79	14488.21	0.92
Nikkei	16613.89	-176.82	-1.06	16820.31	7903.13	3.08
Hong Kong	10670.95	438.92	4.28	16820.31	3171.05	1.51
Hang Seng	4828.83	26.43	0.57	4802.51	3171.05	1.51

## INTEREST RATES

Short sterling	UK 10 year gilt	US long bond
3 month 1 yr 5 yr 10 yr	1 yr 5 yr 10 yr	1 yr 5 yr 10 yr
UK 7.58 1.30 7.52 0.84 5.95 -1.14 5.90 -1.39	US 5.63 0.15 5.66 -0.09 5.47 -0.81 5.83 -0.76	Japan 0.66 0.36 0.82 0.25 1.93 -0.63 2.55 -0.61
Germany 3.50 0.31 3.75 0.52 4.94 -0.54 5.50 -0.76		

Money Market Rates	Bond Yields
3 month 1 yr 5 yr 10 yr	1 yr 5 yr 10 yr
UK 7.58 1.30 7.52 0.84 5.95 -1.14 5.90 -1.39	US 5.63 0.15 5.66 -0.09 5.47 -0.81 5.83 -0.76
US 5.63 0.15 5.66 -0.09 5.47 -0.81 5.83 -0.76	Japan 0.66 0.36 0.82 0.25 1.93 -0.63 2.55 -0.61
Germany 3.50 0.31 3.75 0.52 4.94 -0.54 5.50 -0.76	

MAIN PRICE CHANGES	Falls
Rises Price 50c Day 50c 5 Days	Price 50c Day 50c 5 Days
Woolwich 385.25 24.25 8.54	RMC Group 835.00 -37.00 -4.24
Arjo Wiggins 167.50 8.00 5.68	B&B Biotech 84.00 -4.00 -4.08
Alisons and Lakes 95.50 49.50 5.46	Logica 1262.00 -50.00 -3.94
Bank Scotland 691.00 34.00 5.18	United Biotech 256.00 -10.00 -3.76

## CURRENCIES

**S/E**

Day	Rate
T	1.640
F	1.630
M	1.620
Tu	1.630
W	1.640

**DM/E**

Day	Rate
T	2.980
F	2.985
M	2.990
Tu	2.995
W	3.000

**Y/E**

Day	Rate
T	126.00
F	126.50
M	127.00
Tu	127.50
W	128.00

Pound				Dollar			
	at 5pm	Change	Yr Ago		at 5pm	Change	Yr Ago
Dollar	1.6383	+0.033c	1.6040	Sterling	0.6100	-0.31p	0.6234
D-Mark	2.9881	+0.50p	2.7112	D-Mark	1.8214	-0.43p	1.6891
Yen	126.40	+36.38	199.38	Yen	126.40	-36.41	124.04
S Index	105.10	+0.30	96.80	S Index	108.80	-0.30	104.10

OTHER INDICATORS			
	at 5pm	Change	Yr Ago
Brent Oil (\$)	13.98	0.14	20.49
Gold (\$)	297.55	0.20	345.85
Silver (\$)	6.72	-0.50	5.23
Base Rates			
GBP	113.90	3.10	110.48
RPI	159.50	3.30	154.40
Fed	5.25		
FRF	166.50	3.10	154.40

BLOOMBERG			
www.bloomberg.com/uk			

## TOURIST RATES

Australia (dollars)	2.344	Italy (lira)	2.863
Austria (schillings)	20.29	Japan (yen)	203.40
Belgium (francs)	59.71	Malta (lira)	0.6278
Canada (\$)	2.2876	Netherlands (guilders)	3.2556
Cyprus (pounds)	0.8436	Norway (kroner)	0.8
Denmark (kroner)	11.08	Portugal (escudos)	204.23
Finland (markka)	8.8276	Spain (pesetas)	243.89
France (francs)	9.6753	South Africa (rand)	7.7300
Germany (marks)	2.2878	Sweden (kroner)	12.94
Greece (drachma)	457.01	Switzerland (francs)	2.3420
Hong Kong (\$)	12.24	Turkey (lira)	354.984
Ireland (pounds)	1.1613	USA (\$)	1.5920

Sources: Thomas Cook  
Rates for indication purposes only

www.bloomberg.com/uk source: Bloomberg



## THE INVESTMENT COLUMN

EDITED BY ANDREW YATES

### A heady rating for Woolwich

WHATEVER you think about the rights and wrongs of building societies losing their mutual status, new shareholders are not complaining. After a few initial wobbles all the former mutuals have had a storming share price run since coming to the market. A combination of takeover fever, which has pushed the banking sector skywards, and a buoyant savings market has seen share prices take off in recent months.

Woolwich added to the enthusiasm surrounding the sector yesterday by announcing a special dividend, worth an average of £105 each to investors who held on to their windfall shares. The group has also put aside up to £200m for a share buy-back. The shares duly rose another 6.5 per cent to 395.25p.

But is the market getting over-excited at Woolwich's prospects? Underlying pre-tax profits, excluding conversion costs of £53m, rose 16 per cent to £455.7m. But much of that rise stems from activities outside the society's core business. More than half of the rise comes from non-interest income, such as commission paid to its independent financial advisers by other companies. Its profits were also flattered by substantial cuts in bad debt provisions, which has more to do with the recovery in the housing market than any Woolwich initiative.

And it has shown the same zeal for cost cutting as some of its rivals. Even leaving aside flotation expenses, costs came in at a disappointingly high £362m, well above forecasts. There are growing concerns about the bank's long-term business prospects. Even in a strong market, Woolwich's net lending virtually halved and its market share slipped from 7.5 to just 3.1 per cent. The other staple of building societies - retail bank deposits - saw an outflow of £595m, reversing the inflow from carpetbaggers the year before.

Part of that can be explained by

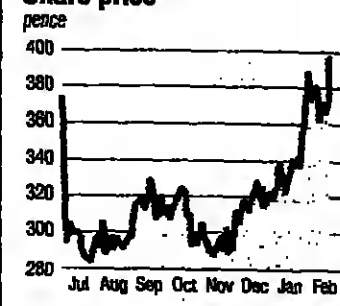
### Woolwich: At a glance

Market value: £5.3bn, share price 395.25p (+24.25p)

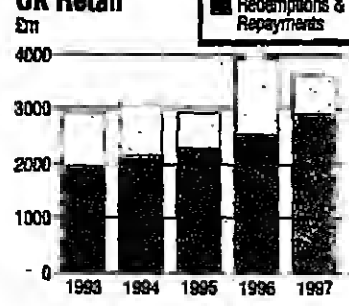
Trading record (as at Dec 31)	1994	1995	1996	1997
Interest income (£bn)	1.8	2.0	1.9	2.2
Pre-tax profits (£m)	302.7	333.0	378.6	402.4
Earnings per share (p)	-	-	14.9	15.8
Dividends per share (p)	-	-	-	15.0

\*prior to flotation

### Share price



### UK Retail



Woolwich's reluctance to take part in a mortgage price war, but it is difficult to see how it can win back market share easily, with prices likely to remain under pressure for some time to come.

A merger is always on the cards, but the higher the price rises, the less likely it becomes. Analysts forecast earnings per share of 20p for 1998, putting the shares on prospective p/e ratio of 20. Considering that rates the shares in line with Lloyds TSB, by far the most successful player in the market, Woolwich's shares are beginning to look very pricey.

Woolwich now has an uphill task to boost its lending and saving business. Shareholders would be wise to take some profits at these levels.

### AIB profits from Ireland's boom

ALLIED Irish Banks has traditionally been the poor cousin in the banking sector, with investors favouring UK-based banking stocks. But with Barclays

et al looking increasingly expensive, attention has turned to the Irish bank, pushing the share price up by a third since the autumn.

Yesterday, AIB shares closed at 734p, up 11.5p following a surprisingly strong set of annual results. In the year to December, pre-tax profits rose 38 per cent to £1,580m (£480m).

Part of the reason was the inclusion of proceeds from a recent US disposal - analysts had expected this to fall into the current financial year. But even after stripping this out, AIB still beat most expectations by 6 to 7 per cent, partly because of stronger-than-expected new lending growth in the booming Irish economy. With the economy forecast to keep up its 8 to 9 per cent growth rate during 1998, AIB should continue to see new lending powering ahead.

After Ireland, which accounts for 41 per cent of AIB's business, the next biggest business area is the US. Here AIB owns a strong regional brand - First Maryland Bancorp - strengthened further last year by the acquisition of Dauphin Deposit Corporation.

AIB has also seemed to avoid the

common pitfalls of investment banking and Asia. It has only a negligible Asian exposure and its investment banking arm is relatively small and tightly focused.

Analysts' forecasts put the bank on a forward p/e of around 15, which looks relatively good value given AIB's solid growth prospects. There are also more chances of acquisition activity. The bank has dropped heavy hints about a Polish purchase, and has also signalled it might bolster its US franchise.

Those wanting to buy into the increasingly pricey banking sector could do far worse than have a look at AIB.

### Mersey Docks thinks long-term

THE INFAMOUS strike by 329 dockers has cast a shadow over Mersey Docks' share price for the past few years. But now it has been settled, albeit at a cost of £10m, attention has turned to a port business which has been doing rather well despite the disruption.

Underlying profits rose 10 per cent to £48m thanks to record cargo volumes and a continued improvement in productivity. The shares responded by jumping 24p to 536.5p, a four-year high.

An ambitious £65m capital expansion programme should reap long-term rewards. New roll-on, roll-off and freight facilities and a redevelopment of its vast property holdings are feasible investments, although the expansion will have the effect of dampening short-term earnings growth.

Mersey has deserved its re-rating. Charterhouse Tilney forecasts full-year profits of £46.5m, putting the shares on a prospective p/e ratio of 15, in line with rivals such as AB Ports and Forth Ports.

However, given that port stocks have been trading water for some time now over fears of an economic slowdown and shockwaves from the Far East crisis, Mersey's share price now looks about right.

## Airtours margins hit as tourists avoid Middle East

AIRTOURS, the UK's second-largest tour operator, yesterday admitted that winter bookings had been hit in the aftermath of the terrorist attack on tourists in Egypt last November.

Airtours was forced to switch its cruise ship, MS Seawing, away from Egypt following the terrible scenes at Luxor, where Muslim militants killed 58 foreign tourists and four Egyptians.

The ship is now based in the Canaries. However, the last-minute switch forced Airtours to offer cut-price deals to fill capacity, which hit margins.

"We decided to pull out of the area due to concerns from our customers. We recovered some of the losses by moving the ship to the Canaries. But sales of the new holidays were not as strong as we hoped," an Airtours spokesman said yesterday.

Despite the set-back, overall UK holiday sales for the three months to December rose 8 per

cent as more Britons chose to jet off to catch some winter sun.

Airtours has not seen any negative effects from the growing Iraqi crisis. But the group said that war in the Middle East could have a knock-on effect on holiday destinations such as Cyprus, Turkey and Tunisia.

Airtours' first-quarter losses rose to £17.3m (£12.1m). The group traditionally makes losses in the first half of its financial year, which cover the quieter holiday months. However, the losses were higher than analysts expected.

Airtours blamed further problems at the group's Scandinavian tour business. Engineering problems and a lack of available planes delayed flights and added to costs. Airtours has also increased discounts to more than 20 per cent on a number of holidays which, in the past, have proved difficult to sell until the last minute.

But the group denied kicking off a price war or flooding the market with more capacity. "This is just tactical discounting and there has been no significant increase in capacity from the major tour operators," the spokesman said.

Airtours' expansion in North America, where it has recently set up a business in Florida, also led to higher seasonal losses. The group said its holiday business in Canada, which has proved a difficult market in recent years, was finally showing signs of recovery.

Airtours is keen to expand its European business and is believed to be among the front-runners to buy a stake in LTL, Germany's third-largest package holiday group, which has been up for sale by Westdeutsche Landesbank. But the deal is still being examined by the German cartel authorities.

### Hollick sells Southern for £47m to rival newspaper group

UNITED News & Media, Lord Hollick's publishing and television group, yesterday took the first step in the disposal of its regional newspaper division when it sold its Southern titles to rival group Southnews for £47.5m.

Southnews will partly fund the acquisition of the 28 titles, which include the *Staines Informer* and the *Enfield Advertiser*, with a placing and open offer to raise £19.6m.

Southnews is understood to have beaten off stiff competition to win the auction. Other bidders are thought to have included regional newspaper groups Trinity International and Newsquest as well as venture capital groups Candover and CVC.

Garth Clark, Southnews' chairman, said the company's bid had been helped by the fact it does not have to be automatically referred to the competition authorities, reducing the risk of a time-consuming enquiry by the Monopolies and Mergers Commission (MMC). Southnews escapes a referral because most of

its titles are free. The Government's decision last week to block a similar deal - the acquisition of Johnston Press by Home Counties Newspapers - is thought to have scared off other trade bidders. Johnston and HCN had said its offer was made on the basis that neither company wanted an MMC inquiry.

Home Counties said yesterday that although its offer for Johnston Press had lapsed, it intended to pursue the acquisition by co-operating with an MMC investigation.

United News said the sale of the other two parts of its regional newspapers division - the Northern and Spanish titles - was "progressing well". Trinity and Newsquest are thought to have pulled out of the running for the Northern titles but Candover is still involved.

Mr Clark said Southnews hoped to save about £1m a year by integrating the businesses. Southnews shares closed up 6p at 465p. United News shares put on 2p to 287p.

### Swansea City plans £75m stadium

By Andrew Yates

SWANSEA City are to have a new, £75m 25,000-seater stadium, under plans unveiled yesterday by Silver Shield, the club's parent. The complex will include a leisure centre and multi-screen cinema as well as conference facilities and create 750 jobs. It will also be used for music events and Super League rugby fixtures. Swansea is even in talks with the Football Association about holding international football matches at the new site.

Neil McClure, chairman of Swansea, dismissed suggestions that the club, currently lying 18th in the third division, would struggle to fill the stadium. "We have big ambitions for Swansea City and want to make it a major force in football," he said.

Silver Shield, which bought an 80 per cent stake in Swansea last August, expects to get planning permission for a 75-acre site at Morfa, a mile west of the city.

### Eli Lilly joins forces with Xenova to develop drug

By Andrew Yates

THE BATTERED biotechnology sector received some much needed good news yesterday when US pharmaceutical giant Eli Lilly teamed up with Xenova, the fledgling UK drugs group, to develop the first new oral drug for more than 40 years designed to stop blood-clotting.

The groups believe the treatment could prevent potentially life-threatening clots in millions of people recovering from heart attacks or major surgery.

The treatment could eventually be developed as an alternative to existing remedies which include Warfarin, a rat poison, and aspirin. These drugs can lead to serious side effects such as bleeding disorders which can lead to hospitalisation.

Lilly has agreed to pay Xenova \$35m (£21m) in licence fees, research funding and milestone payments. It will also put up millions of pounds of marketing and development costs and pay Xenova royalties of 10-15 per cent if the treatment gets through clinical trials. Xenova specialises in discovering drugs from natural sources such as fungi and plant extracts and the new treatment is based on chemicals found in soil. Its share price has suffered along with the rest of the biotech sector over the last 12 months. But news of the deal saw its shares jump 31p to 225p yesterday.

Lilly and Xenova believe a new class of drugs known as PAI inhibitors can stop over-production of a key enzyme which helps the blood to clot in the event of a cut.

More than 13 million people could use the drug in the US alone and Xenova estimates it could attract annual sales of more than a billion dollars.

Lilly is best known for Prozac, the world's best-selling anti-depressant. The tie-up with Xenova is part of a strategy to develop a portfolio of cardiovascular treatments before Prozac goes off patent in 2001.

### Rival bid for Millennium Dome water contract

THAMES WATER is facing an unexpected rival bid for the multi-million pound contract to supply water and sewerage services to the Millennium Dome in Greenwich, South-East London. Albion Water, the joint venture company formed last year by South West Water and Enviro-Logic, the consultancy group which has pioneered water competition, has submitted an application to provide water to the site to Ofwat, the industry watchdog.

Jeremy Bryan, Albion's managing director, said the proposals would reduce drinking water demand by 40 per cent compared with Thames' plans, by extracting supplies from on-site boreholes and using part-treated water for toilet flushing. The application includes the Dome, which will have 700 lavatories and the Millennium Village nearby, with 1,400 homes and other facilities.

### Safeway director leaves

SAFeway, the supermarket group under pressure in the grocery battle, yesterday sought to play down the sudden departure of its trading director and a shake-up at its head office which will result in up to 50 redundancies. It denied the changes were the result of a further deterioration in its performance and indicated its trading statement next Tuesday would show the group is "beating in the right direction". It confirmed that George Charters, the trading director, was leaving Safeway after two years in the job. Mr Charters was responsible for pricing, product availability and the supply chain, which have been behind some of Safeway's recent problems.

### Hong Kong trims forecasts

HONG KONG is sharply downgrading its economic forecasts for the coming year, even though the administration believes it is in better shape than its Asian neighbours. Delivering the first budget of the Special Administrative Region of Hong Kong, Sir Donald Tsang, the financial secretary, surprised the market with what he called "the largest package of tax reductions in Hong Kong's history".

Corporate tax will be reduced from 16.5 to 16 per cent, alongside a host of other corporate tax concessions designed to placate the business sector. The standard rate of income tax remains at 15 per cent, while higher personal allowances and changes to tax bands will deliver tax cuts for nearly all taxpayers.

### T&N back in the black

T&N, the engineering firm, reported a return to profit yesterday as it signed off what are likely to be its last results before takeover by Federal-Mogul of the US. It made a pre-tax profit of £190m last year, against a loss of £388m in 1996 when it made heavy provisions to fence the company off from its past as a major asbestos producer.

### COMPANY RESULTS

	Turnover	Pre-tax	EPS	Dividend
AIB (p)	(-)	180.0m (422m)	8.40 (p 28.4p)	17.7p (15.0p)
Airtours (p)	198.5m (149.7m)	-17.3m (-12.1m)	-0.106 (-0.4p)	18
Bank of Ireland (p)	3.0m (1.5m)	0.014m (0.110m)	0.006 (1.8p)	18
Mersey Docks (p)	108.5m (149.7m)	34.8m (29.85m)	27.4p (22.8p)	14.5p (12.0p)
St Helens Property (p)	41.2m (40.2m)	13.67m (11.00m)	8.2p (8.0p)	3.0p (2.5p)
T&N (p)	1.88bn (2.09bn)	120.1m (-0.388m)	22.0p (-17.5p)	8.2p (3.0p)
Woolwich (p)	(-)	402.4m (276.8m)	15.8p (14.9p)	15.0p

(p) - pence (p) - pence (p) - pence

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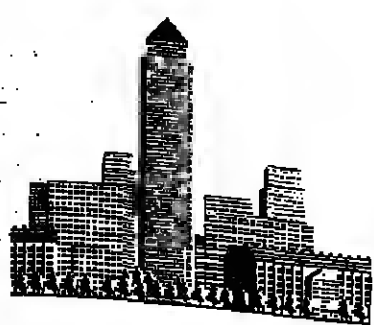
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## OUTLOOK

### ON APPOINTMENTS TO THE COURT OF THE BANK OF ENGLAND, THE CONVERTED BUILDING SOCIETIES' SURPLUS CASH, AND CONFLICTING IDEAS ON JOB CREATION

# Brown fails to shake the Bank's foundations

HAVE you heard the one about the Scotsman, the Irishman and the Welshman? Well, they've all just been appointed to the court of the Bank of England in an attempt by Gordon Brown, the Chancellor, to make Britain's newly independent monetary authority more representative of the regions. There's also a trade unionist - Bill Morris of the Transport and General Workers' Union - and, heaven forbid, a woman - Sheila McKelvie, director of the Consumers' Association.

In other respects, however, Mr Brown's long-heralded shake-up in the higher echelons of the Bank is far from radical. Eddie George is left in situ as Governor, though those darlings at the Treasury kept him sweating as long as they could, and the Chancellor has even reappointed two of the court members he could have replaced. My, it must be difficult to get the right people these days.

By some accounts, all this happened more by default than out of choice. Despite a long search, the Chancellor was unable to find an acceptable replacement for Mr George. Nor, amazingly, was it easy to find suitable candidates for the court, which ends up not so very different in its composition from the one New Labour inherited from the Tories. But then, we're all New Labour now, aren't we?

That said, Mr Brown seems to have got the judgement more or less right. This was probably not the right time to change the Governor, with delicate negotiations still to take place in Europe over Britain's relationship with the single currency. There will be plenty of opportunity for that later, since

Mr George is widely expected to how out gracefully before his second term is up.

Moreover, the choice of new appointments to the court is hard to challenge. In Bill Morris, the Bank gets one of the most accomplished new thinking unionists, while it would be impossible to find a chief executive of more upright quality and high moral values than Jim Stretton of Standard Life. Possibly more out of luck than design, the Chancellor has got his choices spot on.

## The crucial role of capital excesses

IT'S CALLED "excess capital" and apparently anyone who's anyone has oodles of it these days. The utilities had it in bucketfuls; banks seem to have it by the lorry load. Why, most companies worth the name have some degree of it. Companies that don't will find shareholders want to know why. Unless there's a good growth story to tell, the stock market is prone to think the lack of it indicative of management failure.

Let's not dwell too much on the reasons for this phenomenon, which are well rehearsed. Falling long-term borrowing costs, better management and more efficient use of capital are the chief factors. The question is less where it came from as what to do with it. Once upon a time managements used to be able to get away with pouring it into uneconomic investment and acquisitions. Very few can hope to do that now and survive.

So the easy course is simply to give it back to shareholders and let them make

the hard choices on how to reinvest it. That's what most managements are doing. The corporate philosophy of our time is stick to your knitting, and if you cannot find an economic use for your money, let the capital markets do it for you.

Ambitious managements are still prone to stray, however. Indeed, they'd hardly be worth hacking if occasionally they didn't come up with a good alternative. So what should the converted building societies be doing with their excess? Because until recently they've been locked into mutual ownership, unable either to spend or give away their accumulating capital, they've now got rivers of the stuff to dispose of.

A recent circular from Salomon Smith Barney estimated this surplus at more than £6bn for the big three alone (Halifax, Alliance & Leicester, and Woolwich), a figure which seems to be broadly confirmed by Woolwich's own estimate of its excess announced with figures yesterday.

This is normally a highly dangerous position for managements to be in. The risk of profligate expenditure is obvious. As a consequence, the markets are demanding the money be returned as quickly as the converted societies' tax positions allow. With building societies there is a further factor that pushes them down this route: if they buy anything, they lose their five-year protection under the law from hostile takeover and as a consequence immediately become a bid target themselves.

All the same, both John Stewart at the Woolwich and Mike Blackburn at the Halifax, talk merrily about finding other uses for the money, including acquisitions.

With its special dividend and planned share buy-back, Woolwich is promising to deliver the maximum of its excess back to shareholders in tax position allows this year. Even so, that still leaves more than £500m of surplus lying around in the Woolwich coffers without a use. If he can find the right active question, Mr Stewart would happily give up his protection to pursue it. The same is true of Mr Blackburn. The trouble is that with valuations at present levels, it's hard to see what either of them could buy that would deliver value to their shareholders.

For the time being, most of the converted societies seem to have reasonably plausible independent strategies. But looking beyond the five-year horizon, it is hard to see how all of them can hope to remain stand alone companies. Halifax is large enough to lead in the consolidation of retail financial services everyone is predicting. But what of Woolwich and Alliance & Leicester? The betting must be that they will find themselves part of a larger organisation. On what terms that happens depends crucially on how they perform to the meantime, including how they marshal all that surplus capital.

## Brown's third way won't be easy

POLITICIANS always find it hard to resist the claim to have found peace where there was only discord. A "third way" between apparently divergent paths. That's precisely what Gordon Brown is about to do with his jobs summit this weekend, just as

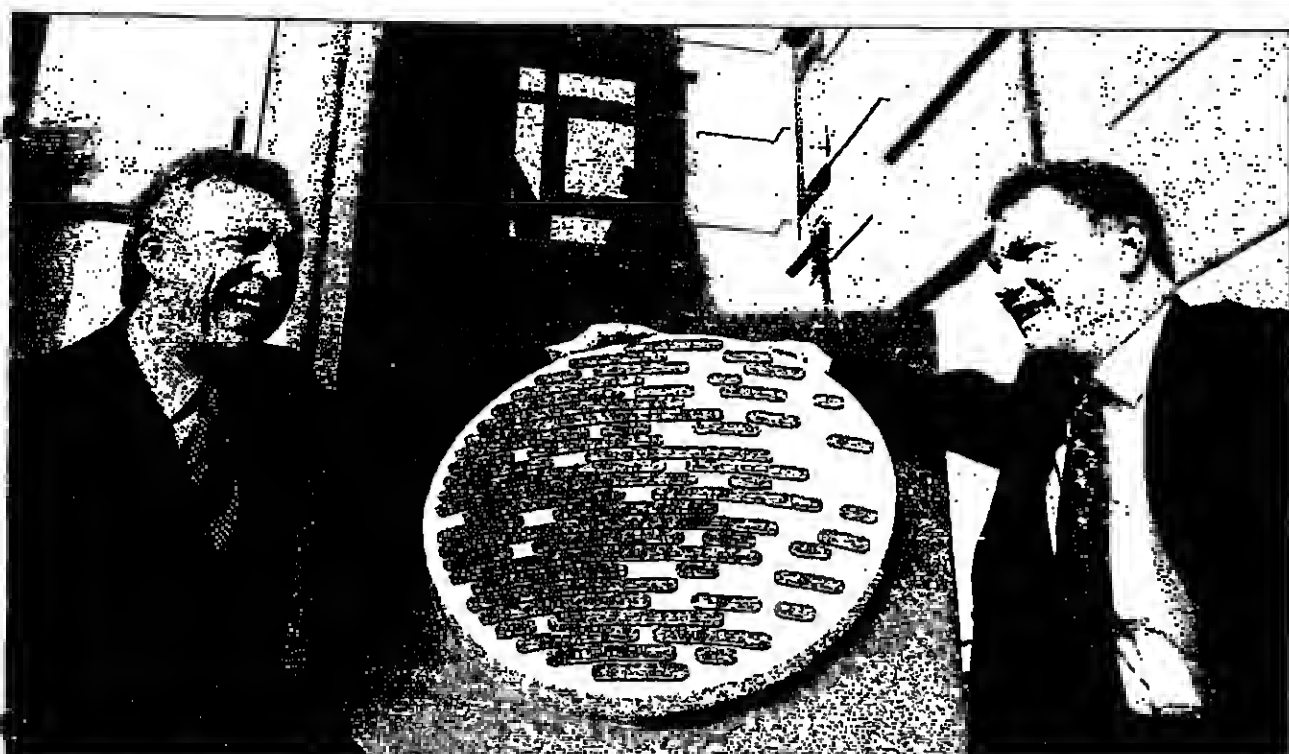
Jacques Chirac, the French President, did when it was his turn to host a similar summit two years ago.

The Chancellor insisted yesterday that the forthcoming meeting was not going to be a mere talking shop. He expected specific proposals for tax reform, a more active welfare system, better competition policies and more ideas for improving venture capital and entrepreneurship to emerge.

Mr Brown is certainly sincere. Let's hope he is right, too. But the omens are not favourable. President Clinton got into trouble for his triumphalism at last summer's G8 summit in Denver, boasting about the US economy's success even as security guards warned offended European delegates not to wander too many blocks in the wrong direction from the convention centre. Since then, the US jobs machine has gone into overdrive, with a record proportion of the American population now in work.

Meanwhile, France has introduced a compulsory reduction in weekly working hours, a mad idea that will destroy rather than create jobs, opposed by everyone - except for the millions of people who voted for the Socialist government last year. The single currency will help focus European minds on the need for economic reforms that will genuinely improve the jobs market. Mr Brown has a list of policy proposals as long as your arm to help them on their way. But even if all those at the jobs summit decide they like the sound of his "third way", he will find they are facing in opposite directions.

# CWC to spend £400m on network improvements



Networking: Gary Donahoe of Nortel (left) and Greg Clarke of CWC announcing the upgrade plans. Photograph: Lucy Blake

By Chris Godsmark  
Business Correspondent

CABLE & WIRELESS Communications (CWC) yesterday raised the stakes in the intensely competitive UK phone market, revealing plans to spend £400m on replacing or upgrading much of its long-distance fibre network.

It also emerged that CWC has appointed accountants Coopers & Lybrand to identify cost savings in the £5bn company, formed out of last year's merger of Mercury Communications, Bell Cablemedia, Videotron and Nynex CableComms.

The new network involves a risk-sharing partnership with the Canadian equipment giant Northern Telecom (Nortel), which CWC claimed would

enable it to leapfrog competitors, including British Telecom and Easnet. It is the largest ever contract won outside North America by Nortel, which was responsible for building Easnet's digital network and the controversial wireless technology used by Iona.

The four-year programme will form part of CWC's £1bn annual investment budget, which is due to generate positive cash-flows by 2000-2001. CWC said the £400m investment was likely to see "low utilisation" in the early years, but the group was anticipating an explosion of data traffic similar to that seen in the US.

Graham Wallace, CWC's chief executive, said the advanced digital technology was of "a completely different order of magnitude" to that used

by competitors. It would increase capacity by at least 10 times on the existing Mercury fibre long-distance network, rolled out during the mid 1980s.

Greg Clarke, CWC's chief operating officer, said the company may also offer voice telephony across the internet. "We don't see internet telephony as a threat, we see it as an opportunity. You can't be a luddite or a King Canute."

Arguments about technology have become increasingly heated among phone operators in recent months, as rivals seek to exploit the shift from traditional voice telephony to high-speed data transmission and internet access. CWC said its network would adopt "self-healing" technology which identifies and fixes faults, similar to that used by Easnet or Colt but on a much bigger scale.

BT, which recently revealed a £300m digital network upgrade, disputed CWC's claim. "We already have the largest advanced network in the UK with more capacity than CWC's," said a spokesman. An Easnet spokeswoman said it would take CWC at least two years to catch up. "By that time we'll have enhanced our network even further. This gives us a window of opportunity to widen the gap."

Mr Wallace declined to reveal the new cost-cutting targets yesterday, but said Coopers & Lybrand would look at ways of shifting resources to the fastest growing parts of CWC's business. Since last year's complex four-way merger five network control centres have been merged down to two sites.

## Shares in new banks surge as Woolwich announces buy-back

By Andrew Verity

MILLIONS of shareholders in the converted building societies enjoyed a mini-windfall yesterday as share prices in the sector surged on news of a share buy-back from Woolwich.

Shares in Woolwich jumped 6.5 per cent to 395p after the recently floated bank said it would spend up to £300m giving capital back to shareholders via a buy-back and special dividend.

Alliance & Leicester rose 49.5p to 955.5p, Halifax was up 21.5p to 940p while Abbey National added 41p to 1,285p as about £1.6bn was added to the value of the companies.

Shareholders with Woolwich will be paid a special dividend of 6.5p per share on top of the 9.5p per share for 1997. People who have kept their windfall shares stand to gain £105 each from dividends alone. Woolwich also announced a rise in profits and said it was seeking permission to spend up to £200m extra on a share buy-back.

Woolwich shares have risen sharply in the last three months on the back of speculation that the group will be taken over by an insurance company or merged with another bank.

However, City analysts yesterday said the share price was being propped up by vague

merger speculation. Jeremy Bastone, head of research at NatWest Stockbrokers, said shareholders should get ready to sell. "They have been lacklustre since their launch and only recently have investors seen any kind of performance from their shares. Better value exists elsewhere in the sector."

John Stewart, chief executive, yesterday confirmed the bank was still interested in mergers or joint ventures. However, he in effect ruled out the possibility that the bank would make an acquisition, saying prices were too high.

"It would be very difficult to do anything on the acquisition

front that would add to shareholder value," he said. "While values are high as they are, in the UK, we will be looking for development by means of things like joint ventures and mergers."

Woolwich saw pre-tax profits rise by 16 per cent to £455.7m last year. But the cost of converting to a bank subtracted £53.3m from the figure.

Since the bank's conversion last July, savers have withdrawn £595m, a reversal of the "carpetbagger effect" in 1996 which saw £696m flow in. Its share of the mortgage market has dropped from 7.5 to 3.1 per cent.

Outlook, this page Investment column, page 24

# Botnar sues Revenue for 'malicious prosecution'

By Chris Godsmark

OCTAV BOTNAR, the 84-year-old founder of Nissan UK, yesterday began legal proceedings for damages against the Inland Revenue alleging malicious prosecution, in the latest twist to the six-year saga over fraud allegations.

Advisers close to Mr Botnar, who has been living in Switzerland since a Revenue raid on Nissan UK's Worthing offices in 1991, said he wanted to "get back into court and have his day".

In a writ served yesterday, Mr Botnar claimed the Inland Revenue based its case on "speculation" in an effort to destroy Nissan UK's business. The writ said that after 18 months of investigations, involving visits to nine countries

and 200 witness statements, it was obvious that the Revenue had uncovered no evidence of fraud by the company.

Two former Revenue special investigators are also named in the writ, both of whom have left the organisation to work for big accountancy firms. They are Robert Brown, now with Ernst & Young, and John Cawdron, who has joined Price Waterhouse. The Revenue last night confirmed it had received the writ, but declined to comment further.

Mr Botnar is claiming damages against the Revenue to cover financial loss and mental anguish. "There has been extensive, humiliating, offensive and degrading publicity generated by the continuance of the prosecution," the writ said, adding that damages would be

paid to the Nuffield Orthopaedic Centre appeal.

The legal move follows the Revenue's decision to withdraw two arrest warrants against Mr Botnar last November on health grounds. He was yesterday said to be "extremely likely" to return to Britain for the court case later this year.

"He's had shame and decision poured down on him and he's desperate to put his side of the story. This matters more to him than anything," said a friend.

Nissan UK agreed to pay the Revenue £59m in 1996 as a corporation tax settlement, though Mr Botnar has since regretted the move. He is also appealing against a separate court ruling ordering him to pay some £68m in taxes on dividends paid to a charitable trust.



Octav Botnar: Nissan UK founder seeks damages

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# Nightmare exit for the 'Dream Team'

## Winter Olympics

Mike Rowbottom  
reports from Nagano

THEY came, they saw, they went back home. Just six days after their first appearance in these Games, the United States ice hockey team, crammed full of top National Hockey League players, was dumped out of the competition by Czech Republic.

After their 4-1 quarter-final defeat, the Americans - who have not won a medal in this competition since their team of college boys upset the mighty Soviet Union in the 1980 final - had a playing record as follows: played 4, won 1, lost 3.

CBS television, the American rights holders for the Games, had scheduled the match to go out live after the David Letterman show.

The result means CBS have lost one of their prime draws for the Games at a distressingly early stage. Not what was required, especially given the early indications that US viewing figures for these Games are down by a third on what they were for the 1994 Olympics.

The professional and highly paid NHL players, allowed into the Games for the first time here, were spread across many nationalities. "We don't have a Dream Team," Gary Bettman, the NHL Commissioner, said. "We have a Dream Tournament."

For all that, the US collection of NHL players was the flagship in a what was a promotional exercise on a huge scale. But after this dismal showing, the NHL franchise shop which has opened just around the corner from the Big Hat rink is unlikely to be doing much business in United States shirts.

"It's disappointing, because everybody expected us to be there at the end," the US forward Keith Tkachuk said. "We expected to be there at the end. But it didn't turn out that way. It's gonna be a long flight home."

The reception at the other end is not likely to be rapturous, as Mike Modano, scorer of



Shock slip-up: The United States ice hockey forward Keith Tkachuk takes a tumble as the Czech goaltender Dominik Hasek and his rearguard block the goal Photograph: Allsport

their only goal, acknowledged: "We have to go back and face the consequences," he said. "We are going to have to answer some questions, since there was a lot of expectation here."

For the Czechs, however, the home reaction was enormous in a country which regards ice hockey as its No 1 sport.

"I rang my girlfriend before the match and she told me everyone was watching on television and in the cinemas," said Martin Straka, who made the Czechs equalising goal. "They were even showing it on TV in the schools."

The Czechs had 12 NHL players in their squad of 23 and it was one of those representatives - goaltender Dominik Hasek - whose contribution proved decisive.

The 33-year-old Hasek from

the Buffalo Sabres - named three times as the NHL's most valuable player - did to the American forwards what Patrick Roy of Canada had done in the last of the round-robin matches, denying them at every turn.

The two goaltenders will come face to face in tomorrow's semi-finals, following Canada's 4-1 defeat of Kazakhstan. Russia, who beat Belarus by the same score, contest the other semi-final with Finland, who defeated Sweden, the Olympic title holders, 2-1.

Michelle Kwan, whom most observers believe will win the women's figure skating title tomorrow if she avoids serious errors, has taken a firm step towards that goal. The 17-year-old American won the short programme - worth one-third of

the total score - with 0.5pts as opposed to the 1pt of her rival and compatriot, Tara Lipinski. Russia's Maria Butyrskaya stood third and China's Lu Chen fourth.

Surya Bonaly, the veteran French skater, ended up sixth and frustrated with the panel. "After 10 years, I am used to it. I am tired of crying and crying," she said. "You can't control the judges."

Bjoern Dahlie, Norway's cross-country skier, won a record seventh Winter Olympics gold medal by the stretch of a leg. The 4x10km relay came down to a sprint in which Thomas Alsgaard, Norway's last man, finished 0.2sec ahead of the Italian Silvio Fauner by sticking out his ski.

## Nagano results and timetable

**Freestyle Skiing**  
Men's aerials final  
1 Eric Bergoust (US) 285.64pts  
(world record)  
2 Sebastian Fossas (FR) 243.79  
3 Dmitri Deschnevsky (RUS) 240.79  
4 A. Valenta (CZ REP) 232.25; 5 B. Swartley (US) 221.07; 6 A. Makarewicz (POL) 220.87  
7 C. Hane (CAN) 221.00; 8 A. Gurnea (GBR) 220.89; 9 S. Kraschuk (UKR) 218.94; 10 N. Forsberg (CAN) 218.93

**Women's aerials final**  
1 Nikki Stone (US) 193.00pts  
2 Xu Nanwen (CHN) 165.87  
3 Collette Brand (GBR) 171.85  
4 T. Koschewnik (UKR) 172.22; 5 A. Zuper (UKR) 168.12; 6 H. Liu (CHN) 168.16; 7 Guo Dandan (CHN) 168.16; 8 V. Kuznetsov (UKR) 153.55; 9 V. Branner (CAN) 151.55; 10 O. Yurchuk (UKR) 138.06

**Cross-country Skiing**  
Men's 4 x 10km relay  
1 Norway 17:40m 55.79m  
(T. Alsgaard, B. Dahlie, E. Jevne, S. Swartley)  
2 Italy 1:40:55.9  
(M. Albertini, S. Fauner, F. May, F. Valbusa)  
3 Finland 1:42:55.5  
(J. Koschewnik, H. Kuvoranta, M. Myllyla, S. Repo)  
4 Sweden 1:42:25.2; 5 Russia 1:42:28.5; 6 Switzerland 1:42:48.2; 7 Japan 1:43:06.7; 8 Germany 1:43:15.1; 9 Austria 1:43:16.5; 10 Estonia 1:43:20.8

**Biathlon**  
Men's 10km sprint  
(freed target in brackets)  
1 Ole Bjørndal (NOR) 23m 16.2sec (5)  
2 Frode Anderson (NOR) 25:12 (2)  
3 Vito Redon (FIN) 25:27 (1)  
4 V. Maygurov (RUS) 25:30 (3); 5 J. Nakama (JPN) 25:33 (1); 6 O. Hachimi (GER) 25:34 (1); 7 F. Lutz (GER) 25:40 (3); 8 M. Harnisch (GER) 25:40 (2); 9 P. Paavonen (FIN) 25:44 (3); 10 P. Canova (ITA) 25:44 (2); 11 S. Bielefeldt (GER) 25:44 (3); 12 M. Gies (GER) 25:44 (3)

**Women's 10km sprint**  
(freed target in brackets)  
1 Ole Bjørndal (NOR) 23m 16.2sec (5)  
2 Frode Anderson (NOR) 25:12 (2)  
3 Vito Redon (FIN) 25:27 (1)  
4 V. Maygurov (RUS) 25:30 (3); 5 J. Nakama (JPN) 25:33 (1); 6 O. Hachimi (GER) 25:34 (1); 7 F. Lutz (GER) 25:40 (3); 8 M. Harnisch (GER) 25:40 (2); 9 P. Paavonen (FIN) 25:44 (3); 10 P. Canova (ITA) 25:44 (2); 11 S. Bielefeldt (GER) 25:44 (3); 12 M. Gies (GER) 25:44 (3)

**Figure Skating**  
Men's short programme  
1 M. Kwan (US) 65.05 pts; 2 T. Lipinski (US) 58.23; 3 M. Butyrskaya (RUS) 53.44; 4 Lu Chen (CHN) 52.51; 5 S. Bonaly (FR) 52.51; 6 S. Bonaly (FR) 50.70; 7 E. Lashenko (UKR) 53.5; 8 V. Kuvoranta (FIN) 40.9; 9 T. Makarewicz (UKR) 45.5; 10 E. Solovieva (RUS) 50.0

**Medals Table**  
1 Norway 8 4 1 13  
2 Germany 7 8 7 22  
3 Norway 7 8 4 19  
4 United States 5 1 4 10  
5 Canada 4 4 2 10  
6 Netherlands 4 1 3 8  
7 Japan 3 3 5 11  
8 Finland 2 3 5 10  
9 France 2 1 3 6  
10 Switzerland 2 1 3 6  
11 South Korea 2 0 0 2  
12 Italy 1 0 0 1  
13 Bulgaria 1 0 0 1

**Alpine Skiing**  
Women's slalom, first leg  
00:30, second leg 04:00; men's giant slalom 02:05  
Nordic combined: 90m ski jumping team event 00:30  
Speed skating: Women's 1000m, 06:00; men's 500m qualifying and final, men's 500m qualifying, men's 500m relay qualifying 00:00  
Biathlon: Women's 4x7.5km relay 04:00  
Television times: BBC2 07:45-08:15, 09:30-10:00, 10:30-11:00, Eurosport 24hr coverage

**Alpine Skiing**  
Women's giant slalom, first leg 00:30, second leg 04:00  
Cross-country skiing: Women's 30km freestyle 00:00  
Nordic combined: 4x5km relay team event 00:30  
Speed skating: Women's 5000m 06:00  
Figure skating: Women's free programme 00:00  
Ice hockey: Men's semi-finals 05:45, 09:45  
Biathlon: Four-man first run 06:00  
Television times: BBC2 07:45-08:15, 09:30-10:00, 10:30-11:00, Eurosport 24hr coverage

**Alpine Skiing**  
Women's giant slalom, first leg 00:30, second leg 04:00  
Cross-country skiing: Women's 30km freestyle 00:00  
Nordic combined: 4x5km relay team event 00:30  
Speed skating: Women's 5000m 06:00  
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## Henman to lose top-20 distinction

## Tennis

BRITAIN'S Greg Rusedski had a much harder fight than expected before beating Hicham Arazi 7-6, 3-6, 6-3 in the first round of the European Community Championship in Antwerp yesterday while Tim Henman, the British No 2, suffered his fourth consecutive first-round defeat when he was beaten 7-5, 6-2 by Magnus Norman of Sweden.

Rusedski, the British No 1, dropped a place to ninth in the world rankings on Monday because he lost the points gained from reaching the final of the San Jose tournament in the United States 12 months ago. Yesterday he was much more powerful than Arazi, but the Moroccan left-hander more than matched Rusedski in the baseline rallies. Though Rusedski served 18 aces to three by Arazi, there was often little to choose between the two.

Because Henman reached the final of this event last year, he will lose more than 200 world ranking points. It will send him out of the top 20 in the world rankings for the first time since 6 October when the next list is announced by ATP on Monday.

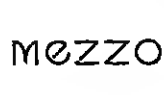
However, Henman will have one consolation. Because he missed more than two months of the season from the end of March last year following an elbow operation, he has no more ranking points to defend until the Nottingham tournament in June. "I'll still be a top-25 player," he said. "Of course it's disappointing, but I know I'm good enough to work hard on the practice court and it will sooner or later pay off on the match court."

Steffi Graf enjoyed a two-set win yesterday in her first singles match in over eight months, at the Hannover Grand Prix. Displaying no signs of the knee injury that threatened to end her career, she beat her fellow German, Andrea Glass, 6-4, 6-2.

THE INDEPENDENT

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## Lloyd insists that flak for bowlers was deserved

### Cricket

Mark Baldwin  
reports from Port of Spain

DAVID LLOYD spelt out the reasons yesterday why he meted out such bitter public criticism to Andy Caddick and Dean Headley last week.

The two fast bowlers were stung by the England coach's decision to single them out for blame following the second Test defeat to the West Indies

here, but Lloyd said that it was all justified – in the light of Tuesday's win in the third Test, also at the Queen's Park Oval.

"I did hand out a little bit of criticism – and it was levelled against two players in particular," he said. "I was looking for a response and I think that we got it. One of them came in with five wickets in the first innings and the other one, Headley, bowled his heart out to take four wickets in their second innings and then helped us win the game

with his batting at the end. I have never been so specific in criticising players before in my time as coach, but on that occasion I thought I would stir it up a bit – but for all the right reasons.

"I thought it was all measured criticism but what moved me to do it was that, in my eyes, our preparation for the Test had been absolutely spot-on but we had still lost the game," Lloyd added. "We needed a better performance in key areas and I'm pleased to say that in this

last match we got it. We won the Test because we played as a unit – so now we can shout that from the rooftops too.

"People under-perform in all walks of life – it's no big thing and we had to be honest. As a coach you have a responsibility, in the main, to protect your team but I felt we needed to be critical on that occasion."

Lloyd said England's triumph, in what will go down as one of the epic Tests, was especially important because of

the contribution of two younger players, Headley and Mark Butcher, and because the team had been made to fight all the way to the finishing line by the sustained brilliance of the West Indian pace veterans, Curtly Ambrose and Courtney Walsh. He added: "They didn't bowl one bad ball for over after over and the fact we have come through against them will be a massive psychological boost."

"It's not so much that we have done it but that we have

done it on a helpful pitch, against the two fast bowlers who I consider to be the best.

"You have to be strong enough to play every ball on its merit and Mike Atherton got it about right when he said the best way of dealing with them is to forget the scoreboard. They gave us a severe examination at the end of that game and it's a big boost that we were strong enough to come through. I'm particularly pleased that Headley and Butcher made

such massive contributions because those two will have never been in a game quite like that before." England's next fixture is a three-day match against Guyana starting on Saturday in Bourda.

● Bad weather caused the first Test between South Africa and Pakistan in Johannesburg to end as a draw yesterday. The home side, who led by 35 after the first innings, closed on 44 without loss after only 10.3 overs were bowled on the final day.

## Perry gets a kick out of adversity

Chris Hewett on the recalled England rookie out to make himself undroppable

MATT PERRY may be a mere rugby player, and a 21-year-old rookie of a rugby player at that, but he continues to reveal depths of patience and self-discipline that would make Buddha look like Paul Gascoigne. If he ever feels the need to write a book, he should steer clear of "Matt Perry: Life at the back" and go for one of those American-style pop psychology manuals. "How to make a million from adversity" sounds about right.

Consider these most recent developments in the Bath full-back's fledgling top-flight career. Having emerged from the pre-Christmas SANZA series as Clive Woodward's find of the season, an ice-cold trickle of negativity chilled his veins as he watched his club-mate, Mike Catt, miss a handful of goal-kicks during a Tetley's Bitter Cup tie with Richmond in mid-January. Perry knew well before the final whistle that his place in Bath's Heineken Cup final side was in jeopardy, albeit through no fault of his own.

Sure enough, Andy Robinson, the Bath coach, gently informed him the following Tuesday that Jon Callard had been recalled simply to put the ball between the sticks and that as a result, he would be watching the climactic match with Brive in Bordeaux from the bench.

It was Perry's 21st birthday and even though he had read the runes correctly, the confirmation left him in an "It's my party and I'll cry if I want to" frame of mind.

The frustration multiplied when Woodward then decided Catt should wear England's No 15 shirt in Paris a week later, a setback Perry had very definitely not seen coming. He has since played one club game against Gloucester in the centre and been overlooked for another with Wasps, so when Woodward recalled him for this weekend's Five Nations encounter with Wales at Twickenham, the youngster greeted the news with a delight tempered by first-hand experience of the capriciousness of life in the sporting fast lane.

"I look at it this way," he says, revealing once again a level-headedness worthy of Isaiah Berlin. "To have gone through all these highs and lows at 21 can only make me a better player and a stronger person, because you quickly understand that the only useful reaction to disappointments like Bordeaux and Paris is to look again at your own game, identify the areas that have left you exposed and then work to put them right."

"To miss out on the Heineken final was bitterly disappointing, even though I understood the reasoning behind the selection. The England thing was slightly different in as much as I didn't think I'd done anything to warrant being dropped. But those decisions are in the hands of others, so you can't get too twisted about it. You have to go the positive route."

"People say I was dropped from the Bath side because of problems elsewhere and in a

sense that's true. But if I'd been a goal-kicker of JC's stature, the situation wouldn't have arisen, would it? That's why I'm concentrating so hard on developing my own kicking skills. JC is the best kicker in the country at the moment and if I can put myself in a position to do a similar job for Bath – to honestly say 'Yes, I'm a genuine goal-kicking full-back' – then the next time I get dropped, it will be all my own fault."

To that end, he has put himself in the hands of Dave Alred, a specialist coach renowned throughout the rugby world as the top man in his field. "We're together for three sessions every week and I can feel it coming on," says Perry. "I've identified the start of next season as the point at which I'll ask for goal-kicking duties. You can't rush these things because confidence is a big, big factor in this area. But by the middle of August, I'll

be looking to pop a few over at first-team level."

Alred, who made record-breaking kickers of Jon Webb and Roh Andrew before guiding Neil Jenkins to his Lions heroics last summer, does not doubt for a moment his new charge's potential as a world-class marksman. "Matt will get there, definitely. Why? Because he's a worker. He puts the time in, he sweats at it, he listens and he learns. To be perfectly hon-

est with you, I can't think of another player of his age with such a professional outlook. He's completely committed and totally honest with himself."

Not that Perry is a cold fish, incapable of relishing the delicious pangs of anticipation during the build-up to a big international occasion. "This Wales game is giving me one hell of a buzz," he says. "In fact, I'd put it right up there with my first cap against Australia last

November. Maybe it's because of the disappointments I've suffered recently, but it's like a first Test all over again."

"When you look at it, I haven't played much high rugby over the last few weeks. I can't tell you how hungry I am for this one. Experienced internationals told me that once I'd played at the top level, I'd want more and more of it. The last three or four weeks have shown me how right they were."

## Evans gives way to Walker at Twickenham but Dallaglio passed fit

By Chris Hewett

THE SPIRIT may be willing, but Iwan Evans' battered body is beginning to protest in the strongest possible terms. Eight months after being invalided out of the Lions tour of South Africa with a serious groin condition, the most celebrated Welsh wing since Gerald Davies has given best to injury once again and withdrawn from this weekend's Five Nations match

with England at Twickenham. Evans has problems with a calf muscle and withdrew yesterday on medical advice. "If he played on Saturday he would risk a muscle tear that might mean a five-week lay-off," Kevin Bowring, the Welsh coach, said. Gareth Thomas switches from left to right wing to create room for Nigel Walker, the former Olympic sprint hurdler from Cardiff, who many Welshmen believe should have

been picked in the first place.

Now only months short of his 34th birthday, Evans does not have too many international occasions left to him. A close season move from Llanelli to Bath rekindled his enthusiasm for top-level rugby and he realised a cherished ambition last month when he helped his new club to the Heineken Cup title in Bordeaux, but his increasingly frequent presence on the injury list suggests he will struggle to

make it to next year's World Cup.

As expected, Lawrence Dallaglio, the England captain, confirmed yesterday that he had recovered from a rib injury and would start the match with Wales. Interestingly enough, a second rib-cage was also declared fully functional, that of Thomas Livremont, the French No 8.

Either Jason Leonard was entirely innocent of stamping on

Livremont's rib-cage during the France-England match in Paris, or he did not stamp nearly as hard as the *Tricolores* maintained in the aftermath of battle. The highly capable 24-year-old forward from Perpignan will take the field against the Scots at Murrayfield this weekend, apparently none the worse for wear.

What is more, his brother, Marc, will accompany him in the French back row. The heavy-

tackling Stade Francais flanker replaced the more experienced Philippe Benetton during the early stages of the England match and brought such omph to the loose exchanges that the selectors have retained his services. "Marc was our best defensive player against the English and we see him playing a key role again on Saturday," said Jo Maso, the team manager.

Livremont's promotion is the only change to the side that beat England far more comfortably than the 34-17 scoreline suggested. Christophe Dominici, a try-scorer in Paris, and Thierry Cleda, the replacement lock from Pau, have recovered from minor injuries and take

their respective places on the left wing and the substitutes' bench.

On the domestic front, England's leading Premiership clubs have put forward proposals for a 14-team competition next season – a move that would see relegation scrapped for the second time in three seasons. Under the plan, due to be considered by the Second Division clubs today, the Premiership Two champions and runners-up would win automatic promotion, with the third and fourth clubs taking on the bottom two top-flight finishers in end-of-season play-offs.

FRANCE XV (v Scotland, Saturday, J. Sedwonyi, P. Benetton, C. Lemaire, S. Glas, C. Dominici, T. Cleda, G. P. Bonneau, F. Tournier, R. Benetton, C. Bonneau, F. Piquot, O. Brouzet, T. Livremont, O. Hargreaves, M. Livremont, R. Piquot, X. Gachet, O. Auzan, F. Gullit, P. Benetton, T. Cleda, C. Soulet, M. del Bono).

## Gullit sunk by clock-watchers stuck in another time

PRESUMABLY because it would be bad for his image, Ruud Gullit has not attempted to justify his manipulation of conventional wisdom. Coach, not manager, represents a sea change in English football, but the Dutchman carried it a stage further. Encouraged by Chelsea to believe that the team and its method was his sole responsibility, Gullit spent a great deal of time on profitable extra-curricular activities. Gullit was so seldom seen in Stamford Bridge outside regular working hours that people began to wonder if he knew exactly how to get there.

One of the questions raised by the reverberation of Gullit's sensational departure is are English clubs entirely comfortable with divisions in authority commonplace elsewhere in Europe?

With this in mind the suspicion held here is that Chelsea's robust chairman, Ken Bates, found Gullit's excessive wage demands convenient. It is easy to imagine that, when the team no longer performed to

his satisfaction, Bates reverted to type, a self-made man who expects his employees to be available at short notice.

Shortly after Gullit was shown the door, I went over the situation with Jack Charlton, who managed Middlesbrough, Sheffield Wednesday and Newcastle before achieving great success with the Republic of Ireland, qualifying them for two World Cups and a European Championship.

Charlton's independence is legendary. Stipulations of agreement with Middlesbrough were that he would not be required to attend board meetings on a regular basis or be denied time for recreation. Although Charlton put more of himself into the job, including assistance with development, he has some sympathy with Gullit's apparent determination to maintain a life outside football.

"I think there is probably more to it than Ruud's asking price," Charlton said. "My guess is that Chelsea expected more of Ruud's time than he was prepared to give."

If Gullit's attitude was ex-



KEN JONES

treme, an unavoidable conclusion is that clubs are still stuck with the notion of manager as factotum.

At the end of a long working day, Tottenham's most successful manager, Bill Nicholson, did not leave without first checking that all the lights were out. Astonishing as it now seems, Nicholson felt responsibility for all matters, including the electricity bill.

Doubtless, this never occurs to Tottenham's present coach Christian Gross, or David Platt, who was recently appointed director of football.

Time was when managers were rarely seen at the training ground – and then only to cast a beady eye over pro-

ceedings. Team talks were brief and uncomplicated. "It's easier to play against 10 men than 11" is one of the instructions I remember.

The coach as deity has become a trusted metaphor, guaranteed to get a cackling response at sporting functions. Speakers used to tell the story of Mrs Clough complaining one night: "God, your feet are cold." Clough replied: "You may call me Brian, dear."

A pretty safe bet is that Gullit will soon replace Clough in that joke, but aloofness from their players does not in itself justify comparison. Clough's frequent absences were made partly to make his men nervous, partly to remind them that they were nothing without him.

Gullit was coming from a different direction, one that the majority of Premier League clubs still find difficult to comprehend. He saw himself solely as supervisor, selector and strategist. Probably, to Bates' eventual irritation, he did not hang around after training and matches. He did not scout players and was sel-

dom seen watching future opponents.

A personal point of view, one nobody is required to share, is that Gullit took liberties. However, his sacking raises the possibility that English clubs will never warm to delegation.

Coaches and managers themselves doubt it. "I like the idea and it would take a lot of hassle out of my life," one said this week. "But try telling that to my chairman," one said this week. "More European bollocks," that's what he'd say to me."

This was, more or less, how a great England inside-forward, Raich Carter, thought about planning when installed in management. Now there was an ego for you, every bit the equal of Gullit's. Carter sat beneath an oil painting of himself dismissive of the thought that his team would benefit from information. "What's the point of speaking to them," he once said, "They can't play."

Gullit never went that far, but his ego may have suggested something similar.

## Portsmouth's books make grim reading

### Football

TROUBLED Portsmouth are on the brink of financial ruin, following yesterday's revelation of losses of more than £2m in the 12 months up to May last year.

Pompey, still bottom of the First Division despite Tuesday's victory over Stockport, lost £2.14m in the last financial year and are running up fresh losses of £175,000 per month.

A statement from the club's directors specifically mentions the former chairman Terry Venables and his recent departure as a factor in Portsmouth's current plight. Venables' successor, Martin Gregory, is hoping to push through a share issue to generate badly needed cash, to the tune of £5.5m – almost enough to pay off the £5.6m currently owed to creditors.

Cash from the sale of Lee Bradbury to Manchester City for £3.5m and Dean Burton to Derby County for £1.5m have not been included in the current accounts. But projected losses of around £1m for players' signing-on fees are also not included – and accounts reveal the club's wage bill rose by £900,000 in the last financial year.

The directors' statement stated that the dispute with Venables has hampered their recovery. "It is no secret that the dispute with Mr Venables severely affected our financial stability," it read. "Fortunately it has now been settled, and we can plan for the future. We believe that we will now all be pulling in the same direction, with the well-being of Portsmouth Football Club as our only concern."

Venables left Pompey last month after an 11-month reign as chairman, and accounts confirm he was paid £325,000 for his services to the club.

Plans for a new £75m stadium for Swansea City were unveiled by the Third Division club's parent company, Silver Shield Group, yesterday.

The company said the 25,000 all-seater stadium project would create 750 new jobs and include leisure facilities such as a multiplex cinema. Silver Shield, which bought an 80 per cent stake in Swansea last August, said they intend the new stadium to be along the lines of Sunderland's Stadium of Light and Stoke City's Britannia Stadium. Silver Shield's chairman, Neil McClure, added that the development would serve the needs of Swansea City and be used for national and regional sports and leisure events. His company is also in talks with Rugby League authorities for a Super League franchise to start in March 1999.

"We are committed to the future success of Swansea and of the football club," McClure said. "This development can become a major leisure facility for the city as well as an important source of new employment."

"It will be a major alliance of public and private capital for the benefit of the community," McClure added. "We anticipate making a detailed planning application in the next three months, subject to satisfactory negotiations with Swansea Council on the joint venture development of this site."

The Nottingham Forest manager, Dave Bassett, is prepared to let Mark Crossley go out on loan. The Welsh international has played two reserve games since returning to action after a seven-month lay off with back trouble, but has been unable to reclaim his place in goal from Dave Beasant.

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AUSTRIA						
Ellmauer	Still good on Zugspitze glacier	80%	22/01	20	100	Cloud breaking
BULGARIA						
Vihren	Snow most at all levels	70%	05/02	110	120	Cloudy
CANADA						
Lake Louise	... J.K. patches	100%	5/02	90	100	Snow buries
FRANCE						
Alpe d'Huez	Snow becoming soft in sun	90%	3/02	85	250	Mildly sunny
ITALY						
Andalo	Upper Paganella looking good	100%	1/02	20	200	Dry and sunny
NORWAY						
Gelbo	Firm-packed snow	80%	16/02	70	70	Broken cloud
SPAIN						
Sierra Nevada	Spring-like strong	85%	08/02	30	150	Clear and mild
SWITZERLAND						
Crans Montana	Variable snow conditions	75%	21/01	15	140	Fine
UNITED STATES						
Winter Park	Mostly packed snow	100%	17/01	155	180	Light snowfall

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# Smith stands by decision on Gascoigne

By Simon Buckland

THE RANGERS manager, Walter Smith, has played down suggestions he exchanged words with an irate supporter during Tuesday night's 3-0 win over Motherwell that put his side into the Scottish Cup quarter-finals.

Some fans were angry at Barry Ferguson being taken off after 79 minutes, and the fact that Stuart McCall rather than Paul Gascoigne was chosen as the man to replace him.

When asked whether he debated that decision with any fans after reports of at least one being ejected, Smith said: "Who me? Do a thing like that?"

His justification for leaving out the England midfielder Gascoigne was no less succinct, saying: "I picked what I felt was the best team on the night."

He was more expressive when discussing his side's display which, while perhaps short on style, was an example of a professional job well done.

He said: "It was a pleasing performance from us tonight as we played very well from start to finish and it was the best we have done for a few weeks."

Andy Watson finally joined Hibernian as assistant manager yesterday, a week after being offered the job. He linked up again with his former Motherwell manager, Alex McLeish, at Easter Road and immediately got down to work.

Watson's final role as assistant manager at Fir Park was to take charge of the squad that lost 3-0 to Rangers in the Tennents Scottish Cup last night. Only a few hours later he made the short drive from his Edinburgh home to the club where he had

a spell as a player. Watson cannot get away from Rangers, though, because the Scottish champions are Hibernian's opposition on Saturday.

McLeish was brought in to replace Jim Duffy last week with Hibernian rooted to the foot of the Premier Division.

The former Scotland international is delighted to have Watson on board. "Andy's strengths are his honesty, integrity and enthusiasm. I am delighted he is joining me. We work well together, and his presence is a vital one at training sessions and on match days," McLeish said.

Watson said: "I was first approached by Alex last Wednesday when he took the job and I said I would like to go along and be his No 2. But departing then would have left Motherwell in a difficult situation, so I agreed to stay and lead the team against Rangers and it was a pleasure to do so."

Financially stricken Partick Thistle could yet be saved by their own supporters after shareholders gave the go-ahead for a new share issue.

Brown McMaster, the club chairman, said: "The fans can now own the club. I have received six cheques worth £1,000 each from supporters wanting to buy into the club. It's been a quite remarkable turnaround and I am excited by the prospect."

Partick face a crucial creditors' meeting within the next few weeks, but two-thirds of them have already accepted 40p in the pound. McMaster added: "If all the creditors agree, this will mean that the money we bring in from a share issue will be working capital."

## Chile cost England place in rankings

ENGLAND have slipped to fifth in the latest Fifa world rankings after last week's defeat by Chile, but there is more bad news for Northern Ireland and Wales.

Glenn Hoddle's team were fourth at the turn of the year but their first loss since June 1997 has seen them swap places with Mexico in the ratings compiled by football's world governing body.

Scotland remain 10th place and the Republic of Ireland have just managed to stay in the top 50, dropping three positions from 47th.

However, Lawrie McMenemy's reign as Northern Ireland manager has begun on an ominous note, with his side dropping to 99th from 93rd to lie below Tanzania and Syria, among others.

And for Wales, the news is even worse - Bobby Gould's side have slumped to 107th from 102nd and are now below the likes of Vietnam and Singapore, just nine places above the Faroe Islands.

Elsewhere, the top three is unchanged, with the Czech Republic - who have failed to qualify for France 98 - third, Germany second and the world champions, Brazil, still top of the rankings.

Italy have dipped to 14th

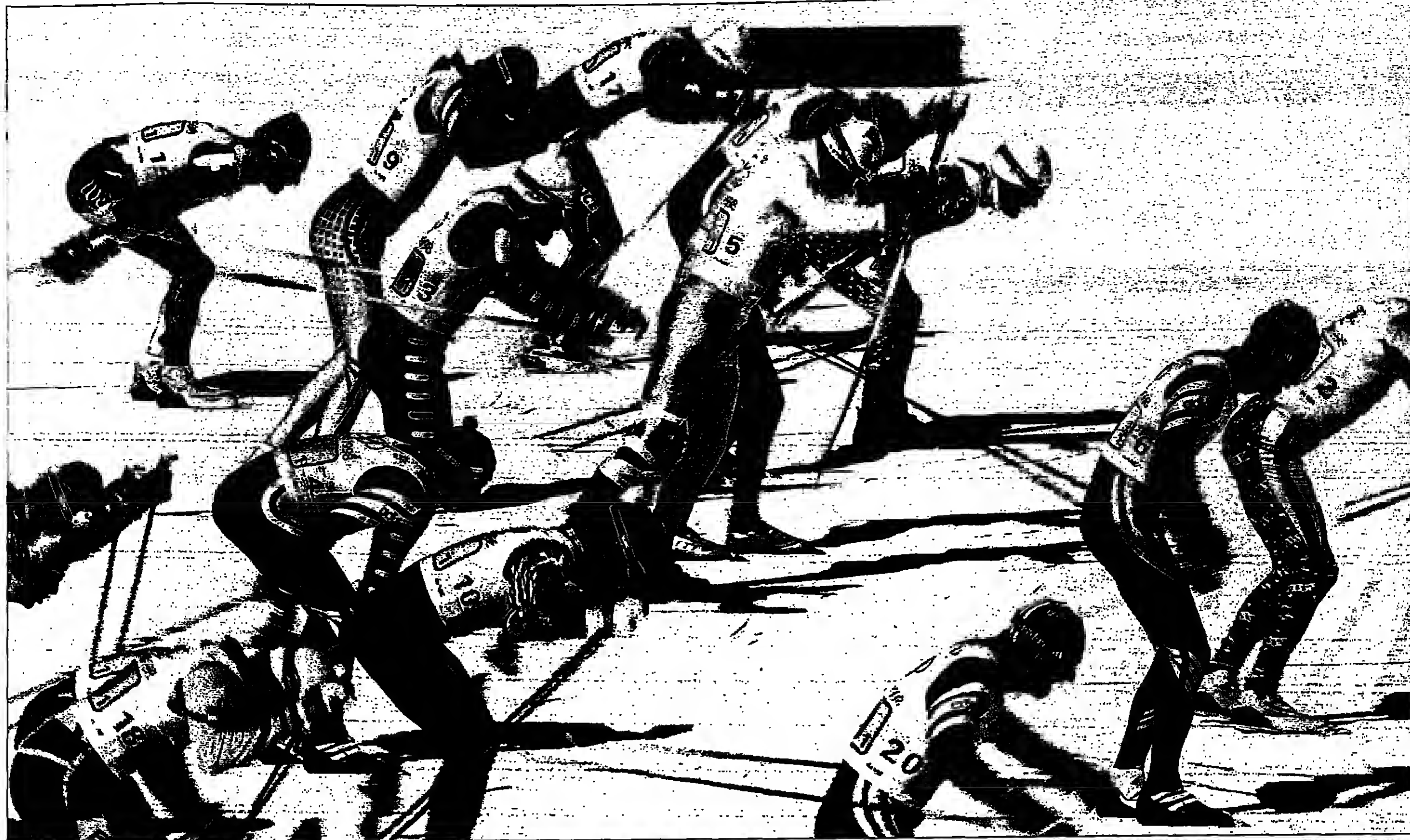
from ninth, while Australia, managed by the former England coach Terry Venables, are still in 35th, the position they occupied at the end of last year. Japan, in ninth, are the first Asian country to appear in the top 10.

Chile rise to seventh from 16th place after their victory at Wembley, while the United States have leapt 14 places to 12th following last week's surprise defeat of Brazil.

**FIFA WORLD RANKINGS** (previous position): Brazil (1) 7258 points; Germany (2) 6725; France (3) 6689; Argentina (4) 6687; England (5) 6689; Chile (6) 6689; Australia (7) 6689; Japan (8) 6689; Korea (9) 6689; Mexico (10) 6689; United States (11) 6689; Colombia (12) 6689; Spain (13) 6689; Italy (14) 6689; Netherlands (15) 6689; Sweden (16) 6689; Denmark (17) 6689; Belgium (18) 6689; Czech Republic (19) 6689; Slovakia (20) 6689; Hungary (21) 6689; Portugal (22) 6689; Greece (23) 6689; Russia (24) 6689; Ukraine (25) 6689; Poland (26) 6689; Yugoslavia (27) 6689; Croatia (28) 6689; Slovenia (29) 6689; Serbia (30) 6689; Montenegro (31) 6689; Bosnia (32) 6689; Herzegovina (33) 6689; Macedonia (34) 6689; Albania (35) 6689; Romania (36) 6689; Bulgaria (37) 6689; Georgia (38) 6689; Armenia (39) 6689; Azerbaijan (40) 6689; Kazakhstan (41) 6689; Uzbekistan (42) 6689; Turkmenistan (43) 6689; Kyrgyzstan (44) 6689; Tajikistan (45) 6689; Uzbekistan (46) 6689; Turkmenistan (47) 6689; Kyrgyzstan (48) 6689; 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## One hundred minutes of hell on skis settled in the blink of an eye



The start (above) of a 4x10,000m relay is always bunched but at the Winter Olympics at Hakuba yesterday, the finish was just as close, Norway beating Italy to the gold medal by two-tenths of a second

Photograph: Reuters

## Royle ready for Maine Road challenge

### Football

By Paul Walker

JOE ROYLE took on one of football's most thankless jobs yesterday, as Manchester City's fifth manager in two years following the sacking of Frank Clark.

"The place is awesome, and people keep telling me that one day someone will get it right," Royle said. "I want that to be me. Everyone says the potential is fantastic - if you do get it right here, you have lift-off. You get

28,000 plus at every game. People turning up to see a team that has been struggling for four or five years."

Royle, a stalwart centre-forward for City in the 1970s, said he is looking forward to helping the club avoid relegation to the Second Division.

Royle said: "I am used to this. When I went to Everton they had just eight points and they ended up with 50. I am used to coming in as a firefighter to put things right. Let's face it, City now have a 15-game season to save themselves from the

drop and I intend to make sure that is achieved. Everything else can wait until that has been achieved."

Royle, who turned the job down when he was at Oldham in 1990, played in the same City side as the current reserve team coach, Asa Hartford, while another former team-mate, the new City director, Dennis Tueart, was instrumental in his appointment. Royle, who will sign a three-year contract, will work closely with Tueart.

It was to the Seventies side that Royle looked for inspira-

tion yesterday, saying: "It mustn't be forgotten that when myself, Asa and Dennis played in this team it was the top club in the city."

"Now, the place is full of internationals but we find ourselves looking up the table at supposedly smaller teams like Crewe and Bury. I haven't asked the chairman about money yet, or whether there are millions to spend. I doubt there is any money."

"That is not the issue at the moment. This is a massive club and it should not be where it is."

"I will know more in seven days when we have played three hard games. I will assess the situation, look at the players, and then go to the chairman with my ideas," Royle will also try to bring in his former No 2 at Everton and Oldham, Willie Donachie, as coach, bringing back to City another member of the 70s City side. "My first job is to get the chairman to get in touch with Mike McDonald at Sheffield United to try to get Willie Donachie released to join me," Royle said.

Royle described the players

who have let City down this season as underachievers. "I have seen City two or three times this season," he said. "My feelings are mixed - I saw them win at Forest when they were excellent. But I have seen them on days when they have not been so good. That sums them up: they are underachievers, they have been inconsistent. More consistently bad than consistently good."

"That's not having a go at anyone who has been here. I have got a lot of admiration and affection for Frank Clark. It's

unfortunate. I am not having a go at anyone, I just have to cope with these next 15 games."

Royle has been out of work for 11 months, and said: "I've had a rest following what happened at Everton, and initially I have enjoyed the rest. It was my first break from football for 30 years, I've been away on holiday, got to know the wife again, but I have started wanting to be back in the game."

Clark was upset by the

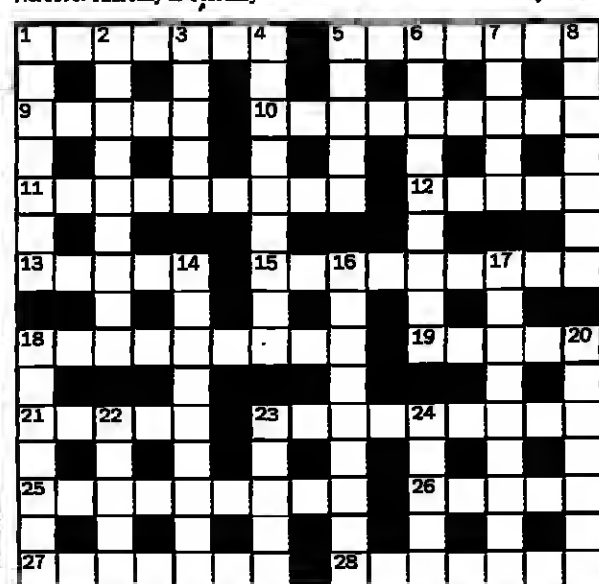
method of his departure. "I feel disappointed for myself, my staff and the supporters for the way it has happened," he said. His back-room team of Alan Hill, Richard Money and Peter Edwards have also been sacked. "But the club has done what it sees fit. I don't want to make any excuses. It has been a very difficult season, no two ways about it. It's a massive job for someone but it will take a long, long time to get it right."

### THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

No. 3598, Thursday 19 February

By Mass

Wednesday's solution



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U A P E V  
CHANGEL HAVAN  
S O A H O V A  
INSURANCE POLICY  
V A U E T U O V  
ENIGMA FASTENERS

#### ACROSS

- 1 Concise new clause? (5)
- 5 About page (7)
- 9 Brings a Jack into play (5,2)
- 10 Wrong to get sued? (5)
- 11 Pulled out grass choking poor tater (9)
- 12 The complex has room for research? Your hint worked (9)
- 13 Eastern dialect, backward one (5)
- 15 Direct for stage (5)
- 18 Living without spirit, needing new birth (9)
- 19 Tyres feel insecure, with unlimited racing activities (9)
- 21 Arrogant urge to restrict Union (5)
- 22 Form of life some caterpillar validates (5)

#### DOWN

- 23 Without a light finds field and diamond chest (5-4)
- 25 The basis for a trade gap? (9)
- 26 Started, took off, about one (5)
- 27 Mass's after Sunday roast (7)
- 28 Bone in back near middle of rump (7)
- 1 Bulldozes edge in flower (7)
- 2 It'll show depth of pride concealing endless pretence (5-4)
- 3 Inferior to European articles (5)
- 4 One on a charge? (6-3)
- 5 Lock about to be inserted in part of wooden framework (5)

#### ACROSS

- 6 First of flock on sheep-run prepared for wash (7,2)
- 7 Was observer smooth? (5)
- 8 Quietly going on, expanding (7)
- 14 Proof emerging from tedious point in trial (9)
- 16 Regards e.g. resting as aimless (9)
- 17 Deity enshrined in one (reportedly Oriental) remote state (9)
- 18 Issues absorbing the Spanish dons (7)
- 20 Rank that's outstanding, reinforced by King with title (7)
- 22 Fish like a perch - course, as the saying has it (5)
- 23 Bill has no time for the puzzle (5)
- 24 Bears note with urgency (5)

## Dutch brickbats for Nagano bouquets

### Winter Olympics

By Kieran Daly

THE DUTCH are getting all worked up about the Winter Olympics. First, the nation's florists are fulminating about the floral displays at the medal ceremonies in Nagano, suspecting an Oriental plot to do down their industry. Then yesterday, the chairman of the Dutch Olympic Committee resigned, a week after reportedly calling Crown Prince Willem-Alexander a "Judas" and "saboteur" for joining the International Olympic Committee.

Dutch speed skaters, who dominated the awards podium again on Tuesday with an unprecedented medals sweep in the men's 10,000 metres, are not getting fitting floral tributes. The flower executives grumble. The gold medalist Gianni Romme, silver medalist Bob de Jong and bronze winner Rintje Ritsma was given a small bunch of red, pink and yellow flowers bound with a pink ribbon.

Though their victories sparked wild celebrations across the Netherlands, the choice of flowers prompted some pointing in the land of the tulip.

"Those bouquets are poor. It's as simple as that," Warren de Vroe, of the International Flower Bulb Centre, said yesterday.

"I was very happy that they

were there, all three of them, but it would have been an even nicer picture if they had had proper Dutch bouquets," De Vroe added.

De Vroe's organisation, which represents hundreds of Dutch flower growers and exporters, had offered to provide bouquets to all medalists for free. Japanese officials organising the Games politely refused.

"Probably to protect their own flower industry," De Vroe said with a sigh.

Dutch growers even developed a yellow and white "Nagano" tulip for the Games, but so far it has only been seen inside Holland House, a centre for Dutch athletes and media at the Winter Olympics.

The Dutch are not used to floral snubs; last year, their exports of cut flowers totalled 5.3 billion guilders (£1.63bn).

The heart of the matter, De Vroe conceded, might be a clash of Western and Eastern tastes. "The problem is that what they are doing, for Japanese standards, is out of this world," he said. "But the rest of the world sees a nasty little bunch of flowers."

In the IOC spat, in a letter to members of the Dutch committee, Wouter Huibregtse - who wanted an IOC posting himself - denied using pejorative terms to describe the sports-loving heir to the Dutch throne. In public appearances at the

Winter Olympics in Nagano, Japan, Willem-Alexander appears to have been untroubled by the remarks. He beamed on Tuesday as he hung gold, silver and bronze medals on Dutch speed skaters Gianni Romme, Bob de Jong and Rintje Ritsma for their medal sweep in the 10,000m men's race.

The respected Dutch daily *De Volkskrant* had quoted Huibregtse last week as harshly criticising Willem-Alexander, who is also a member of the Dutch committee, during a telephone interview with one of its reporters.

In yesterday's letter to his colleagues, faxed to journalists by the Dutch Olympic Committee, Huibregtse claimed that *De Volkskrant* "paraphrased my input and sometimes totally invented" comments.

Huibregtse added that he was considering legal steps against the newspaper. The chief editor of *De Volkskrant* has said the newspaper stands by its report, though its ombudsman wrote in a commentary that "in an unguarded moment through the publication of a few words, the newspaper went too far."

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